00029820

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY-400 023.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 27 February, 2016

00029820

Vol. VI 29820 29820 a.c.

CONTENTS OF VOL. VI.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

FRANCE FROM THE CAPTURE OF CONSTANTINE IN OCTOBER 1837, TO THE TREATY REGULATING THE AFFAIRS OF THE EAST IN JULY 1841.

§		Page
1.	Universal joy in France at the storming of Constantine,	1
2.	Fresh creation of peers,	*ib.*
3.	M. Arago as a political leader,	2
4.	His failings,	3
5.	MM. L. Blanc, Dupont de l'Eure, and Lafitte,	4
6.	Opening of the Chambers,	5
7.	Rapid growth of railway companies,	6
8.	M. Arago's Report on the railway lines,	7
9.	General prosperity of the country,	8
10.	Fever of speculation in France,	9
11.	General frauds committed on the public,	10
12.	Influence of the passion for gain on literature and the press,	11
13.	Change it induced in the system of government,	12
14.	Scandalous increase of corruption in France,	13
15.	Position of Count Molé, and his attention to the Court,	14
16.	Statistics of the army, and social concerns,	*ib.*
17.	Last illness and death of Talleyrand,	16
18.	His character,	17
19.	Conspiracy of Hubert,	18
20.	Louis Napoleon is obliged to leave Switzerland and come to England,	20
21.	Evacuation of Ancona,	21
22.	Affairs of Belgium,	22
23.	Military preparations, and wild views of the Belgian republicans,	23
24.	Views of the English Cabinet on the subject,	24
25.	Obstinacy of the Belgians, and military preparations of France and Prussia,	25
26.	Failure of the Bank of Brussels, and settlement of the question,	26
27.	Differences of France and Mexico,	28
28.	Reflections on the attack of land defences by sea forces,	29
29.	Instances on each side,	30
30.	Instances from the present war,	*ib.*
31.	Probable conclusion on the subject,	31
32.	Coalition against, and dissolution of the Chambers,	32

§		Page
33.	Ministerial crisis, and attempt to form a Liberal Administration,	33
34.	Vain attempts to form a Ministry,	34
35.	La Société des Familles. Its organisation,	35
36.	Which is changed into the Société des Saisons,	37
37.	Insurrection of May 12, which is suppressed,	38
38.	Second Ministry of Marshal Soult,	39
39.	Character of M. Villemain,	*ib.*
40.	State of parties after this change,	40
41.	Trial of Barbes and the conspirators,	41
42.	Conviction and sentences of the accused,	42
43.	Views of Barbès and his associates in this conspiracy,	43
44.	Progress of the Napoleon party,	45
45.	Increased strength of the Government,	46
46.	Debate on the affairs of the East,	*ib.*
47-50.	Lamartine's speech on the subject,	47-50
51-53.	Argument of M. Villemain on the other side,	51-52
54.	Marshal Soult's measures in the East,	53
55-56.	M. Jouffroy's exposition of the Government system,	53-54
57.	Affairs of Africa after the storm of Constantine,	54
58.	Their threatening aspect,	55
59.	Commencement of the insurrection,	56
60.	Vigorous defensive measures, and successes of the French,	*ib.*
61.	Death of the Princess Maria of Würtemberg,	57
62.	Creation of twenty peers,	*ib.*
63.	Commencement of agitation for a lowering of the suffrage,	58
64.	View of the Liberals as to the government of the executive,	59
65.	Commencement of the session of 1840; the King's speech,	60
66-69.	Speech of M. Thiers on the Eastern question,	61-63
70.	Reflections on this debate,	64
71.	Marriage of the Duke de Nemours and the Princess of Saxe-Coburg Gotha,	*ib.*
72.	Dotation of the Duke de Nemours thrown out by the Chamber,	65
73.	M. Thiers' second Ministry,	66
74.	First division supports the Ministry,	67
75.	Early measures of the Ministry,	68
76.	State of the public press,	69
77.	Bill regarding infant labour,	70
78.	Project for removing the bones of Napoleon to Paris,	71
79.	Inauguration of a pillar to Insurrection on the Place of the Bastile,	73
80.	Expedition of Louis Napoleon to Boulogne,	74
81-82.	Failure of the enterprise,	75-76
83.	His trial, and sentence of imprisonment,	77
84.	His life in prison, and its beneficial results,	78
85.	Attempt of Darmès to assassinate the King,	79
86.	Disinterment of the bones of Napoleon,	80
87.	Reinterment of Napoleon in the Church of the Invalides,	81
88.	Political manifestations on the occasion,	*ib.*
89.	Threatening state of affairs in the East,	82
90.	M. Guizot's account of the British policy in the East,	83
91.	M. Thiers' answer,	84
92.	Treaty of July 15, 1840,	85
93.	Memorandum of the Allied Powers,	*ib.*

Page
94. Indignation in France on hearing of this treaty, 86
95. Vigorous measures of the French Cabinet, 87
96. Division of opinion on the fortification of Paris, 88
97. Great preparations of M. Thiers, 89
98. M. Guizot's memorandum to the English Government, 90
99. M. Guizot's opinions on the Eastern question, 91
100. Withdrawal of the French fleet from the Levant, 92
101. Immediate cause of M. Thiers' downfall, 94
102. The new Ministry, 96
103. King's speech at opening the Chamber, 97
104-106. Debate on the Address, 98-99
107-109. Answer of M. Guizot, 100-101
110. Division in favour of Government, 102
111. Continuance of the fortifications of Paris, ib.
112. Marshal Soult's military view of the question, 103
113. Alarming state of the finances, 104
114. Treaty of Feb. 13, 1841, regarding the East, 105
115. Great escape which Europe made at this period, 106
116. Reflections on this treaty, 107
117. Way in which this was brought about, 108
118. What occasioned the error, 109

CHAPTER XXXV.

INTERNAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM THE ACCESSION OF SIR R. PEEL IN THE END OF 1834, TO THE FALL OF HIS MINISTRY IN APRIL 1835.

1. Vast effect of the changes in the Currency Laws during the peace, 111
2. Leading evils of the Currency Laws, ib.
3. Grand error from which they spring, 112
4. Danger of a currency mainly based on the retention of gold and silver, 113
5. Partial but insufficient recognition of these principles in our monetary system, 114
6. Double set of dangers of a currency based on the retention of gold, ib.
7. Remedy for these evils, 116
8. The rise of interest in a monetary crisis is not owing to want of capital, ib.
9. Argument of the bullionists in favour of their system, 117
10. Answer to this argument, 118
11. Such a currency must be based on the national security, 119
12. Effect of the monetary laws in inducing the prosperity of 1835, 120
13. Growing prosperity of 1835 and 1836, 121
14. Joint-stock mania, 122
15. Burning of the two Houses of Parliament, 123
16. The new Cabinet, 124
17. Sir Robert Peel's address to the electors of Tamworth, 126
18. Peaceable manner in which the change was received in the country, 127
19. Result of the elections in England, 128
20. Returns in Scotland, 129
21. Irish elections, and junction of Liberals and Catholics there, 130
22. Division on the choice of a Speaker, 131
23. Division on the Address, 133

§ Page
24. King's reception of the Address as amended, ... 134
25. Exasperation of the Whigs at Sir R. Peel not resigning, . . 135
26. Motion for repeal of the malt-tax lost, ... *ib.*
27. Great diminution in the consumption of beer, ... 137
28. Debate on Lord Londonderry's appointment as ambassador at St Petersburg, ... 138
29. Lord Londonderry's declinature of the office, ... 139
30. Sir Robert Peel's remedial measures, ... 140
31. The Whigs attack Government on the Irish Church question, . . 141
32. Lord John Russell's motion regarding the Irish Church, . . 142
33-37. Argument in favour of the motion, ... 142-145
38-42. Answer of the Ministry, ... 146-149
43. Division on the question, and resignation of Sir R. Peel, . . 150
44. New Ministry, and Melbourne its head, ... 151
45. Importance of this short Administration of Sir R. Peel, . . 153
46. Which averted the danger of revolution in Great Britain, . . *ib.*
47. Effect of this in restoring the House of Lords to their functions, . 154
48. Its pernicious effects upon Ireland, ... 155
49. Liberal measures forced upon Government by the change, . . 156
50. Great rise of Sir R. Peel in general estimation from this short Administration, ... 157
51. Merits of Lord J. Russell's proposal regarding the Irish Church, . 158

CHAPTER XXXVI.

DOMESTIC HISTORY OF ENGLAND, FROM THE RETURN OF THE WHIGS TO POWER IN APRIL 1835, TO THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA IN JUNE 1837.

1. Lord Melbourne's announcement of his principles of government, . 160
2. Character of Lord Melbourne by Sydney Smith, . . . 161
3. Defeats of Ministers at the new elections, ... 162
4. Ministerial measures of reform, ... 163
5. Scotch Burgh Reform Bill, ... *ib.*
6. Government report on the English corporations, . . . 165
7. Heads of the ministerial Corporate Reform Bill, . . . 166
8. General features of the bill in a political point of view, . . 167
9-11. Argument in support of the bill, ... 168-170
12-14. Argument of the Conservatives on the other side, . . 170-172
15. Fate of the bill in the Commons and Peers, ... 173
16. Reflections on this change, ... 174
17. Its great defect, ... 175
18. True principle on the subject, ... 176
19. Ministerial bill for Church reform, ... 178
20. Defeat of motions regarding the currency, agricultural distress, and proceedings regarding Orange lodges, ... 180
21. The budget, and extinction of the surplus, ... 181
22. Mr O'Connell's crusade against the House of Lords, . . . 182
23. Spread of these extreme opinions among the operatives in towns, and the Radicals in the Commons, ... 183
24. Great apprehensions of the Ministerialists, ... 184
25. Great, though gradual, creation of Whig peers, ... 186

§		Page
26.	State of the West Indies,	188
27.	Commencement of the troubles in Canada,	189
28.	Demands of the discontented in both the provinces,	190
29.	Opening of the Assembly, and demands of the Opposition,	191
30.	Opening of Parliament, and King's speech,	193
31.	The state of the Irish corporations,	*ib.*
32.	Government plan, and abuses complained of,	194
33.	Argument in support of the bill,	196
34-37.	Argument against the bill,	196-199
38.	The bill is carried in the Commons,	200
39.	The bill is essentially altered in the Lords, and finally rejected in the Commons,	201
40.	Irish Church Bill again passed in the Commons, and thrown out in the Lords,	*ib.*
41.	Perils of this state of collision between the two Houses,	202
42.	Increased agitation against the House of Lords,	203
43.	Effects of this agitation in Ireland,	204
44.	Re-establishment of the Catholic Association,	206
45.	Report recommending a Poor Law in Ireland,	207
46.	History of the measure, and causes of its long abeyance,	*ib.*
47.	Mr Nicholl's Report, and its awful revelations,	209
48.	English Tithe Bill, and for registration of births, deaths, and marriages,	210
49.	Agricultural Distress Committee, and refusal of currency investigation,	212
50.	The Budget,	213
51.	Deplorable weakness of the navy and army,	*ib.*
52.	Lord Dudley Stuart's remarkable speech on the Russian power in the East,	215
53.	Increasing discontents of Canada, and settlement of the upper province,	216
54.	Violent proceedings of the Assembly in Lower Canada,	217
55.	Public meetings on both sides. The banquets in London and Leeds,	218
56.	The Glasgow banquet to Sir R. Peel,	219
57.	Opening of Parliament,	221
58.	Irish Corporations Bill,	*ib.*
59.	Poor-law Bill, which passes without a division,	223
60.	Statistics of Irish destitution,	224
61.	Great difference in the statistics of the two countries of Great Britain and Ireland,	225
62.	Final establishment of poor-laws there,	*ib.*
63.	Reflections on this subject,	227
64.	Ministerial plan for abolishing church-rates,	228
65.	Lord Normanby's administration in Ireland,	229
66.	Compromise between the two houses on the appropriation clause and Municipal Bill,	231
67.	Which is carried into effect,	232
68.	Settlement of the Irish Municipal Bill,	233
69.	Fate of the bill in 1839 and 1840,	234
70.	Affair of the Vixen. Its origin,	235
71.	Capture of the vessel by the Russians,	*ib.*
72.	Proceedings in Parliament on the subject, which is dropped by Government,	237
73.	Death of the King,	238

§ Page
74. Accession of Queen Victoria, ... 238
75. Her Majesty's Speech to the Privy Council, ... 239
76. Separation of Hanover and Great Britain, which goes to the Duke of Cumberland, ... 240
77. Death of Mrs Fitzherbert, ... 241
78. William IV. His character, ... 242
79. Ill-founded complaints against him by the Conservatives, . . 243
80. Beneficial effect of the change of Ministry and dissolution, . . 244
81. Cause of this, ... 245

CHAPTER XXXVII.

ENGLAND FROM THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA IN JUNE 1837, TO THE RESIGNATION OF LORD MELBOURNE IN MAY 1839.

1. Vast extent and seeming prosperity of the British empire, . . 246
2-3. Its many sources of weakness, ... 247-248
4. America: what was its great want? . . . 249
5. Vast advantages of a paper currency in America, . . . 250
6. Great prosperity of America from 1820 to 1835, . . . 251
7. Prudence, upon the whole, of the United States banks, . . 253
8. Vast purchase of lands in the Far West with these notes, . . 254
9. Difference between the political feeling of landholders in Europe and America, ... 255
10. Aristocracy in America grew naturally in the towns, . . . 256
11. And democracy in the country, ... 257
12. What renders party contests so violent in America, . . . 258
13. General jealousy of the banks on the part of the Democratic party, . 259
14. General Jackson: his measures against the banks, . . . *ib.*
15. Ostensible and real grounds of complaint against the banks, . . 260
16. Enmity of the Democrats provoked by the extension of banks in the back settlements, ... 261
17. Commencement of the contest. Jackson vetoes the bill for the renewal of the Bank Charter, ... 262
18. Withdrawal of the public deposits from the United States Bank, . 263
19. Which is approved of by the House of Representatives, and condemned by the Senate, ... 264
20. General crash in the Union, ... 265
21. New York in vain petitions in favour of the Bank, . . . 266
22. Increased hostility of General Jackson to the Bank, . . . 267
23. Increased banking mania in the West, ... 268
24. The President's account of the operations of the western banks, . 269
25. Treasury order regarding cash payment for public lands, . . *ib.*
26. Mr Biddle's description of the effects of these measures, . . 270
27. Disastrous effects of this state of things, ... 271
28. Universal ruin which ensued in America, ... 272
29. Universal bankruptcy, and increased measures against the banks, . 273
30. Increased straits of Government, and ruin of the revenue, . . 274
31. Increased crisis in 1838 and 1839 in the United States, . . 275
32. Disastrous effect of these measures on the United States, . . 276
33. Effect of these changes in America on England, ... 278

§		Page
34.	Excess of imports over exports,	279
35.	Bad seasons from 1836 to 1841,	280
36.	Calamitous harvests of 1838 and 1839,	281
37.	Bad crop of 1839,	282
38.	Crops of 1840 and 1841,	283
39.	Immense distress in the country during these years,	284
40.	Effect of these changes on the currency,	285
41.	Contraction of the currency, rise of interest, and stoppage of credit,	286
42.	General terror in Great Britain and America at the export of gold from England,	288
43.	Immense effects of this drain of gold on both sides of the Atlantic,	290
44.	Panic in Belgium and France,	291
45.	Distress in Great Britain,	*ib.*
46.	Decline of prices was the cause of this suffering,	293
47.	Effect of these disasters on the new Poor-Law Act,	295
48.	Dissatisfaction at the Act, and its entire abrogation by the distress of 1839,	296
49.	Debate on the subject in the House of Commons,	297
50.	Trades-Unions and Strikes; Chartism and Ribbonism,	298
51.	Origin of trades-unions,	299
52.	Increase of strikes from 1834 to 1837,	*ib.*
53.	Great Cotton-spinners' strike in 1837, and its break-up,	300
54.	Indictment of the Committee for conspiracy and murder,	302
55.	The trial, and its results,	304
56.	Beneficial results of this trial,	305
57.	Vast importance of the subject, and its general neglect,	306
58.	Causes of the little attention paid to them in society,	308
59.	Reason why strikes are of so frequent occurrence,	309
60.	Institution of the Darg,	310
61.	What is required in these cases to guard against the evil,	311
62.	Rise of Chartism from the same general distress,	312
63.	Six points of the Charter, and causes of their popularity,	313
64.	Real objects of the Chartist hostility,	314
65.	Rise and progress of the Chartist movement,	315
66.	Chartist riot in the Bullring, Birmingham,	316
67.	Declaration of the Duke of Wellington on the subject, and great moral effect of the outbreak,	317
68.	Mr John Frost and the Newport riot,	318
69.	Attack on Newport, and its failure,	319
70.	Origin of the Anti-Corn-Law League,	320
71.	Cause of the success of the Anti-Corn-Law League,	321
72.	Mr Cobden and Mr Villiers, and first proceedings in Parliament on the subject,	322
73.	Free Kirk movement in Scotland,	323
74.	Origin of the secession, and severance of the Scotch Church,	324
75.	Effects of the schism,	325
76.	Reflections on this subject,	327
77.	Affairs of Canada,	328
78.	Different temper of Lower and Upper Canada,	329
79.	Great effects in Canada of the American crusade against the banks,	330
80.	Approach of the contest in Lower Canada,	332
81.	Commencement of the insurrection,	333

§		Page
82.	Success of Colonel Wetherell at St Charles,	334
83.	Decisive success of Sir John Colborne at St Eustache,	*ib.*
84.	Great results of these successes,	335
85.	Commencement of the insurrection in Upper Canada,	336
86.	Advance of the rebels,	337
87.	Their entire defeat,	338
88.	Glorious conduct of the militia in the upper province,	339
89.	Efforts of the American sympathisers to invade Canada,	340
90.	Burning of the Caroline by Colonel M'Nab,	341
91.	These proceedings disclaimed by the American Government,	*ib.*
92.	Reflections on this piratical warfare,	342
93.	Measures of Government in this emergency,	343
94.	Report of the committee of the Assembly on the wants of Canada,	344
95.	State of the Canadas when Lord Durham arrived,	345
96.	Three courses open to Lord Durham, and which he chose,	346
97.	Mistake in the ordinance regarding the transportation of the prisoners,	348
98.	Difficulty when the prisoners arrived in Bermuda,	349
99.	Lord Glenelg proves unequal to the crisis,	350
100.	State of parties, and weakness of Government when the intelligence arrived,	*ib.*
101.	Lord Durham resigns,	351
102.	His valuable report on Canada,	352
103.	Fresh breaking-out of the rebellion,	353
104.	Actions with the insurgents, and their defeat,	354
105.	Defeat of the American invaders,	355
106.	Fresh rout of the Americans at Sandwich,	356
107.	State trials after the suppression of the insurrection,	357
108.	Execution of the leading American sympathisers,	*ib.*
109.	Reflections on this subject,	359
110.	Great change in the institutions of British North America,	360
111.	Effect of this upon the local Canadian government,	361
112.	Vast growth of Canada since 1841,	362
113.	Reflections on this wonderful increase,	364
114.	Adaptation of democracy to new colonies,	365
115.	Recent growth of this prosperity, and opposite condition of the United States,	366
116.	Opposite state of the British provinces at this time,	367
117.	Disturbed state of the West Indies, and failure of the Apprentice System,	369
118-120.	Lord Brougham's picture of the increased horrors of the slave trade,	370-371
121.	Violent clamour in England, and total abolition of slavery,	372
122.	Reception of the emancipation in the West Indies,	373
123.	Difficulties consequent on it,	*ib.*
124.	Refractoriness of the Jamaica legislature, and its dissolution,	375
125.	Fatal results of emancipation,	*ib.*
126.	Position of the Ministry,	377
127.	Government measures suspending the constitution of Jamaica,	378
128-129.	Argument of Ministers in support of the bill,	379-379
130-131.	Answer of the Conservatives,	380-381
132.	Ministers have only a majority of five, and resign,	382
133.	Real reasons of this step, as assigned by Lord Melbourne,	*ib.*
134.	Sir R. Peel is sent for, and forms the programme of a Government,	383

§ Page
135. Difficulty about the household appointments, which causes the negotiation to fail, ... 384
136. Observations of Sir R. Peel, Lord Melbourne, and the Duke of Wellington, on the subject, ... 386
137. Election of a Speaker, and second Jamaica Bill, ... 387

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ENGLAND FROM THE RESTORATION OF THE WHIG MINISTRY IN MAY 1839 TO THEIR FALL IN AUGUST 1841.

1. Queen's popularity after her accession, ... 388
2. Her coronation, ... 389
3. Her marriage to Prince Albert, ... 390
4. Reflections on this auspicious event, ... 391
5. His family, and Protestant principles, ... 392
6. Legislative measures of the period. Criminal law, . . . 393
7. Reflections on this subject, and the neglect of secondary punishments, 394
8. Mode in which the change was brought about, ... 395
9. Important resolution of Parliament regarding colonisation, . . *ib.*
10-11. Important facts connected with emigration and colonisation brought out in this debate, ... 397-398
12. New colonial system of England, ... 399
13. First settlement of British colonists in New Zealand, . . . 400
14-17. Speech at Glasgow to the New Zealand emigrants, . . 400-403
18. Post-office reform. Mr Hill's plan, ... 405
19. Results of the measure, ... 406
20. Causes of its failure as a source of revenue, ... 407
21. Stockdale's case, and the privilege of Parliament, . . . 409
22. Committal of the Sheriffs for breach of privilege, . . . 410
23-24. Reflections on this subject, ... 411
25. Murder of Lord Norbury, and crime in Ireland, . . . 412
26. Statistics of Irish crime in 1837, 1838, and 1839, . . . 413
27. Alliance of the Government with O'Connell, ... 414
28. Lord Normanby's wholesale liberation of offenders, . . . 415
29. The misery of Ireland, and inadequacy of the remedies proposed, . 417
30. Which mainly arose from Ireland being the battle-field of parties, . 418
31. Deplorable state of the finances, ... *ib.*
32. Increased perils of the country in various quarters, . . . 420
33. Injustice of the general opinion on the subject, ... 421
34. Slight increase of the army in 1839, ... 422
35. Extreme weakness of the navy, ... *ib.*
36. Outcry for the abolition of the Corn Laws, ... 424
37. Mr Villiers' motion for the repeal of the Corn Laws lost, . . 426
38. Increased agitation on the subject, ... *ib.*
39. Attack on the Queen, ... 427
40. Extreme difficulties of Ministers, ... 429
41. New Reform Bill for Ireland, and its fate, ... 430
42. The Whig budget, ... 431
43. Which is lost on a division, ... 432
44-47. Sir R. Peel's argument against the budget, . . . 433-435
48-52. Lord Palmerston's reply, ... 436-439

§ Page
53. Reflections on this debate, ... 440
54. Subsequent measures. Vote of want of confidence, . . . 441
55. Dissolution of Parliament, ... 442
56. Immense excitement in the country, ... *ib.*
57. Result of the elections decidedly in favour of the Tories, . . 443
58. Defeat of Ministers in both Houses, and their resignation, . . 445
59. Reflections on the fall of the Whigs, ... 447
60. The fall of the Whigs was owing to the Reform Bill, . . . 448
61. The supremacy of England was destroyed by the Reform Bill, . 449
62. Which is owing to Catholic ascendancy in Ireland, and passion for self-government in Scotland, ... 450

CHAPTER XXXIX.

INDIA FROM THE TERMINATION OF THE MAHRATTA WAR IN 1806, TO THE FALL OF BHURTPORE IN 1826.

1. Universal feeling of mankind to resist foreign aggression, . . 452
2. Reasons of this universal feeling, ... 453
3. Apparent exception to this rule in British India, . . . 454
4. Advantages of the English government, ... *ib.*
5. Evils of the English government which have subsequently appeared, . 455
6. Extent of the British empire in India, ... 456
7. Great payments drawn from India and spent in England, . . 457
8. Exclusion of the natives from situations of trust or emolument, . *ib.*
9. Injury to Indian industry from the connection with Great Britain, . 459
10. Causes of the extreme poverty of the inhabitants of India, . . 461
11. Vast means of irrigation furnished by nature, ... 462
12. Great extent of the sea-coast of India, ... 463
13. Great public works which formerly existed in India, . . . 464
14. Difficulties of the British Government as regards public works, . 465
15. Results of the Zemindar system, ... 467
16. The Village-system, ... 468
17. General increase of produce over India, ... 469
18. Effects of a real reciprocity, if established, with India, . . . 470
19. Neglect of India as a cotton-producing country, . . . 471
20. Impossibility of augmenting indirect taxes in India, . . . 472
21. Revenues of the Company, ... 473
22. Decline of Indian industry under the former British administration, . 475
23. Items of the Indian revenue, ... 476
24. Monopolies of opium and salt, and lesser sources of revenue, . . *ib.*
25. Military establishment in British India, ... 478
26. Military establishment of India not excessive, ... 480
27. Sepoy troops, ... *ib.*
28. True policy to be pursued in regard to India by the British Government, 482
29. Judicial establishment of India, ... 483
30. The protected States, and their rapid decline, ... 484
31. Great want of a paper circulation in India, ... 486
32. Great drain on the precious metals of England from India, . . 487
33. Splendour of the recent history of India, ... 488
34. Lord Cornwallis's second administration, ... 489
35. Discreditable terms of the treaty to the English Government, . . *ib.*

§		Page
36.	Death of Lord Cornwallis, and accession of Sir George Barlow, who concludes the Mahratta peace,	490
37.	Mutiny at Vellore,	491
38.	Lord Minto's Administration,	492
39.	Lord Moira's Administration,	493
40.	Ghoorka war,	494
41.	Early disasters of the campaign,	*ib.*
42.	General Ochterlony's successes,	495
43.	Further successes of the British, and conclusion of peace,	497
44.	Negotiations for a final treaty broken off by the Ghoorkas,	498
45.	Causes of the Pindarree war, and their outrages,	499
46.	Lord Hastings' great preparations, and commencement of the war,	500
47.	Farther successes of Lord Hastings. Battle of Kirkee,	501
48.	Second check of the Peishwa,	502
49.	Farther successes of the British,	503
50.	Ravages of the cholera in Lord Hastings' army,	504
51.	Victory of Lord Hastings, and termination of the war,	505
52.	End of the war, and of Lord Hastings' administration,	506
53.	Reflections on Lord Hastings' government of India,	507
54.	Amherst Administration, and war with Burmah,	508
55.	Irruption of the Mughs, and causes of discord with the Burmese,	509
56.	Resources of the Burmese, and difficulties of the war,	510
57.	First operations of the war. Taking of Rangoon,	511
58.	Slow progress of the war, and sickness of the British,	512
59.	Successes of the British,	513
60.	Reverses sustained by them,	*ib.*
61.	Sufferings of the British in Rangoon,	514
62.	Reverses on the Arracan frontier,	515
63.	Fresh efforts of the British, and their success,	516
64.	Victories of the British before Rangoon,	517
65.	Actions during the advance on Prome,	518
66.	Capture of Prome,	519
67.	Storming of Arracan,	520
68.	Renewed difficulties of the British from sickness,	521
69.	Decisive victories of the British,	522
70.	Advance of the British towards the capital, and submission of the Burmese,	523
71.	Renewal of hostilities, and final defeat of the Burmese,	524
72.	Conclusion of peace,	525
73.	Reflections on the Burmese and Pindarree wars,	526
74.	The Burmese war was necessary and unavoidable,	527
75.	Treaty with the King of Siam,	528
76.	Mutiny at Barrackpore,	529
77.	Vigorous suppression of the revolt,	530
78.	Reflections on this event,	531
79.	Commencement of the difference with the Rajah of Bhurtpore,	532
80.	Increased disturbances at Bhurtpore, and interference of the British,	533
81.	Commencement of the war, and forces of the British,	534
82.	Commencement and difficulties of the siege,	535
83.	Progress of the siege,	536
84.	Assault of the place,	537
85.	Decisive results of this victory,	538
86.	Acquisition of Singapore, in the Straits of Malacca,	539

CHAPTER XL.

INDIA FROM THE FALL OF BHURTPORE IN 1826, TO THE AFFGHANISTAN DISASTER IN 1842.

§		Page
1.	Consequences of these triumphs in causing an undue reduction of national forces,	540
2.	Embarrassed state of the Indian finances,	541
3.	No one thought of relaxing the commercial code of India,	542
4.	Character of Lord W. Bentinck, the new Governor-general,	543
5.	His first measures of economy,	544
6.	Farther economical reforms,	545
7.	Immense reduction of the army,	546
8.	Abstraction of officers of the army to fill diplomatic situations,	547
9.	Abolition of the Suttee,	548
10.	Destruction of the Thugs,	549
11.	Removal of the civil forfeitures consequent on conversion to Christianity,	550
12.	Political transactions of Lord W. Bentinck's administration,	551
13.	Restoration of the passage to India by the Red Sea,	552
14.	Sir Charles Metcalfe's interim government, and liberation of the press in India,	553
15.	Reflections on this change,	554
16.	Character of Lord Auckland,	555
17.	Deposition of the Rajah of Sattara,	556
18.	The North is the quarter from which India is threatened,	557
19.	Persia is the chief barrier against the north,	558
20.	Affghanistan is the next barrier: description of it,	*ib.*
21.	Character of the Affghans,	559
22.	General character of Affghan history,	560
23.	Extent of the Douranee empire in 1810,	561
24.	Threatened invasion of Zemaun Shah, and coalition with the French,	562
25.	Treaty with Persia in February 1801,	563
26.	Rupture with Persia, and alliance with Affghanistan,	564
27.	Renewed alliance with Persia,	565
28.	Jealousy of Russia comes in place of that of France in the East,	566
29-30.	Progression and rapid advance of Russia in the East,	567-568
31.	Great effect of the Turkish war and revolutions in France and England in augmenting the danger from Russia,	569
32.	Reflections on the chances of a Russian invasion of India,	570
33.	Affghanistan remained as the only barrier against Russia,	571
34.	Means by which it might have been retained in the interest of England,	*ib.*
35.	State of Affghanistan at this time,	572
36.	Subsequent adventures of Shah Soojah, and his vain efforts to regain his throne,	573
37.	Policy which should have been pursued was to support Dost Mahommed,	574
38.	Russian designs on Herat,	575
39.	Kingdom of the Sikhs,	576
40.	Jealousy and wars between the Sikhs and the Affghans,	577
41.	Russian intrigues at Cabul,	578
42.	Miserable policy pursued towards Dost Mahommed by Lord Auckland,	579
43.	Liberal promises of the Russian agent,	581
44.	Siege of Herat: description of it,	582

§		Page
45.	Commencement of the siege,	583
46.	The siege,	584
47.	Progress of the siege,	585
48.	Final assault,	*ib.*
49.	Extreme distress of the besieged,	587
50.	Interference of the English, and raising of the siege,	588
51.	Great effects of the raising of the siege in Asia,	589
52.	Great effects of this defeat of Russia,	590
53.	Great mistake committed on this occasion by the English Government,	591
54.	Treaty for the restoration of Shah Soojah,	592
55.	Reflections on this treaty,	593
56.	Preparations for the Affghanistan expedition,	594
57.	The forces,	595
58.	Magnificent displays in the Punjaub,	597
59.	Commencement of the march,	598
60.	Early difficulties of the march through Scinde,	599
61.	Passage of the Indus, and march through the Bolan Pass,	*ib.*
62.	Passage of the Bolan Pass,	601
63.	Increased sufferings of the troops,	*ib.*
64.	Reception of Shah Soojah in Candahar,	603
65.	Passage of the Kyber by Colonel Wade's force,	604
66.	Great sensation in India from these events,	605
67.	Movement of the army towards Cabul,	606
68.	Description of Ghuznee, and plans of Dost Mahommed,	607
69.	Melancholy tragedy before Ghuznee, and plan of the attack,	608
70.	The assault,	*ib.*
71.	Capture of the fortress,	610
72.	Results of the victory,	611
73.	Vain efforts of Dost Mahommed to make a stand, and his flight,	*ib.*
74.	Entry of the British into Cabul,	612
75.	Honours bestowed on those engaged in the expedition,	613
76.	Flattering appearance of the country,	614
77.	Real causes of embarrassment to the Indian Government,	*ib.*
78.	Plans of Lord Auckland for the future in Affghanistan,	615
79.	Attack on Khelat,	616
80.	Pleasant quarters of the troops in Cabul in autumn and winter,	617
81.	Growing difficulties of the British position,	618
82.	Russian expedition against Khiva,	619
83.	Fresh difficulties in Affghanistan,	620
84.	Disquieting intelligence from Herat and the Punjaub,	*ib.*
85.	Threatening aspect of things in the Punjaub,	621
86.	Progress and varied success of the insurgents,	622
87.	Checks in the Bamian Pass,	623
88.	Further disasters in the Bamian,	*ib.*
89.	Dost Mahommed's defeat at the Bamian Pass,	624
90.	Fresh efforts of Dost Mahommed,	625
91.	Threatening advance of Dost Mahommed,	626
92.	His victory,	*ib.*
93.	His surrender,	627
94.	Increased tranquillity of the country,	628
95.	Renewed insurrection, and victory of Nott,	629
96.	Victory of Colonel Wymer near Khelat-i-Ghilzye,	630

§		Page
97.	Progress of the insurrection of the Douranees in eastern Affghanistan,	631
98.	Last insurrection,	632
99.	State of affairs at Cabul,	633
100.	Forces at and near Cabul in October 1840,	634
101.	Infatuation of the defensive arrangements at Cabul,	635
102.	Conduct of the British,	*ib.*
103.	Breaking out of the insurrection, and death of Burnes,	636
104.	Inactivity and supineness of those in command of the troops,	638
105.	Loss of the Commissariat Fort,	639
106.	Further loss of stores,	640
107.	Fatal effect of these losses,	641
108.	Storm of Mahommed Shereef's Fort,	642
109.	Jealousy between Elphinstone and Shelton,	643
110.	Storming of the Ricka-bashee Fort,	644
111.	Results of this success,	645
112.	Actions on the heights,	*ib.*
113.	Macnaghten calls up troops from Jellalabad and Candahar, which are not sent,	646
114.	Destruction of the Ghoorka regiment in the Kohistan,	648
115.	Arguments for a removal into the Bala-Hissar,	649
116.	Fruitless attempt at negotiation,	650
117.	Action on the 23d November,	651
118.	Total defeat of the British,	652
119.	Negotiations with the enemy,	653
120.	Arrival of Akbar Khan, and renewal of the negotiation,	654
121.	Capitulation with the Affghans,	655
122.	Faithlessness of the Affghans, and increased misery of the troops,	656
123.	Secret negotiation of Sir W. Macnaghten with Akbar Khan,	657
124.	His murder by Akbar Khan,	658
125.	Reflections on this event,	659
126.	Fresh treaty, which is opposed by Pottinger,	660
127.	Conclusion of the treaty,	662
128.	Commencement of the march,	663
129.	Increasing horrors of the march,	664
130.	Passage of the Coord Cabul defile,	665
131.	Ascent of the Coord Cabul plateau, and surrender of the ladies,	666
132.	Almost entire destruction of the column,	*ib.*
133.	Continuance of the retreat to Jugdulluck,	667
134.	Termination of the retreat, and arrival of one survivor at Jellalabad,	668
135.	Conduct of Sale and Nott,	669
136.	Termination of Lord Auckland's administration, and Lord Ellenborough's appointment,	670
137.	Reflections on the injustice of the Affghanistan expedition,	671
138.	Errors in the conception of the expedition,	672
139.	Disproportion of the force to the object in view, and its effects,	*ib.*
140.	Injudicious conferring of civil offices on military officers,	673
141.	Extreme error in the military arrangements at last,	674
142.	Causes of this,	675
143.	Causes to which the disaster was owing,	676
144.	Real causes of the disasters in a military point of view,	*ib.*
145.	True way of combating the evil,	677
146.	Two dangers, and their remedy,	679

55
F

HISTORY OF EUROPE.

Alison
Vol I

CHAPTER XXXIV.

FRANCE FROM THE CAPTURE OF CONSTANTINE IN OCTOBER 1837, TO THE TREATY REGULATING THE AFFAIRS OF THE EAST IN JULY 1841.

THE storming of Constantine and restoration of the lustre of the national arms on the coast of Africa, diffused universal satisfaction in France, and powerfully contributed to strengthen the throne of Louis Philippe. In proportion to the grief and mortification which had been experienced at the preceding reverse, was the joy at the glorious and decisive manner in which it had been expiated. The Liberal party in Paris, indeed, had never been favourable to the occupation of Algeria, and had repeatedly, both in the Chambers and the press, urged its entire abandonment. But none could be insensible to the glory of the French arms; and the romantic incidents of the siege of Constantine, with its heartstirring assault, acted like the sound of a trumpet on the hearts of that warlike and imaginative people.

1. Universal joy in France at the storming of Constantine.

The general election of 1837 had somewhat, though not materially, augmented the majority of Count Molé and the administration in the popular Chamber; they had now a nominal majority of twelve or fifteen in the Deputies. But this majority, small as it was, was com-

2. Fresh creation of peers.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1837.

posed of so many and such divided sections of parties that it could hardly be relied on in any decisive crisis, and was likely entirely to fail on any question which strongly agitated the public mind. The Cabinet therefore felt the necessity of strengthening themselves in the Upper House by a fresh creation of peers, and they had recourse to another of those desperate acts which purchased present ease at the expense of the future respectability and influence of the Chamber of Peers. By an ordonnance of 3d October 1837, *fifty-two* additional peers were created, and took their seat on the benches of the Upper House. This was the fourth great creation which had taken place within a few years; and, combined with the limitation of the titles to life, and their exclusive appointment by the Crown, it deprived the peers of all respect or influence, either as a check on the Executive or a barrier against the people. The object of this new creation was to form a sort of *juste milieu* in the Chamber, which might counterbalance a possible coalition of the Legitimists, headed by M. de Montalembert and M. de Dreux-Brézé on the one side, and the Liberals under MM. Villemain and Cousin on the other. It is remarkable that a system which in this manner proved utterly destructive of the mixed constitution and balance of power in France, had been so recently before earnestly pressed upon the English Government by the popular party, and that not only by political leaders in the heat of conflict, but by sagacious philosophers in the solitude of rural life.[1] *

[1] Cap. ix. 361-363; L. Blanc, v. 237-242.

3. M. Arago as a political leader.

As the parties in the Chamber of Deputies were so nearly balanced, the greatest efforts were made by both sides in the elections, especially in those for the city of Paris. With a view to organise an effective opposition against the Government, a central committee was formed

* See in particular Sydney Smith's Letters to Earl Grey, urging, in the strongest terms, a creation of sixty or eighty peers to force the Reform Bill through the House of Lords, in May, June, and July 1832, in Lady Holland's very interesting Life of that eminent man.

in Paris to watch over and promote the Liberal interest in the elections; and so narrow was the division of parties, that an ample field was afforded for this, for out of 13,982 voters, 6303 were ranged on the side of Opposition. At the head of the committee in Paris was placed M. ARAGO, a man scarcely less eminent in political strife than in the peaceful walks of science. Indomitable energy and perseverance were his great characteristics, evinced at every period of life, as they are of almost all who do great things in the world. At the age of twenty; having been despatched by the Bureau des Longitudes at Paris to complete the measurement of an arc of the meridian in Spain, he passed six months on the inhospitable summit of one of the Castilian mountains. Sent by Napoleon as envoy into Spain at the commencement of the Peninsular War, he was thrown into the prison of Valencia, and subsequently of Rosas, where he declined the opportunity of escape presented to him, rather than separate from his beloved scientific instruments. What distinguished him in an especial manner was the variety and extent of his acquirements. While renowned as a scientific man in every country of Europe, he brought to bear on his political adversaries a nerve, an eloquence, and an extent of information which created universal astonishment, and rendered him one of the most popular leaders of the Liberal party, to which he was strongly attached. Ardent in everything, he turned alternately, and with equal vigour, from the calm contemplation of nature to the stormy affairs of men, and, like Wallenstein, as figured by the poet, sought relief from the contests of the forum in the study of the celestial bodies.[1]

[1] L. Blanc, v. 274, 275.

4. His failings.

These eminent qualities in Arago, however, were not without a certain intermixture of alloy. He had more vehemence than perseverance, and often did injustice to his great powers by the variety of objects to which they were applied. He was so keen in every pursuit that he was often distracted by the multiplicity of those in which

CHAP. XXXIV. 1837.

he was engaged. More skilled in books than men—the child of thought, not of experience—he was little qualified to be the leader of a party, and often created jealousy by his neglect of the inferior agents, upon whom the fortune of every public man must in great part be built. His temper was violent, and often very irritable; and he was far from possessing that coolness in debate which so frequently gives practised speakers so great an advantage over men, in other respects their superiors, who have been trained only in the closet. Impetuous in all things, he often sacrificed his ultimate end for a momentary impulse; and was diverted from an important object by the vehemence with which he assailed an adversary, or the warmth with which he resented the injuries of a friend.[1]

[1] L. Blanc, v. 277, 278.

5. MM. L. Blanc, Dupont de l'Eure, and Lafitte.

With this illustrious philosopher and orator, however, were united others of more practical character, and who supplied what he wanted in the management of a political party. M. Louis Blanc, to whose genius and eloquence this History has been so often indebted, brought to the guidance of the democratic committee the energy of a powerful mind, the skill of an accomplished orator, and, what was of still more value to them, a devout belief in human perfectibility and the unbounded improvement of the people, under the influence of Socialist principles and the sway of the most ignorant, inflammable, and destitute of the community. With him was associated M. Dupont de l'Eure, who was equally sincere in his hatred of the *bourgeoisie*, now in possession of power, and in his belief of the disappearance of all social evils before the rising sun of democracy. M. Lafitte, also, was a member who, disappointed in the result of his dream of a "throne surrounded by republican institutions," and essentially injured in fortune by its effects, was now inclined to go all the lengths of pure republicanism. From the character and talents of these leaders it was evident that, though the social contest was for the time hushed, and the thirst for gain had come, in

the middle class, to supersede the passion for power, yet the revolutionary principle was far from being extinct, and that nothing was wanting but general distress or extraneous circumstances to fan the embers, and cause the fire to blaze up again with fresh fury, and embrace the whole monarchy in its flames.[1]

[1] L. Blanc, v. 272, 273.

6. Opening of the Chambers. Jan. 18, 1837.

The session of 1838 met on the 18th December 1837, and the King, with reason, congratulated the Deputies on the improved internal condition of the country, and the glorious event which, externally, had added so much lustre to the French arms. "France," said he, "is free and tranquil; its prosperity rapidly increases, its institutions are consolidated, it has daily more confidence in their stability. The supremacy of the laws has permitted me to realise the dearest wish of my heart—a great act, the memory of which will always be pleasing to me; the amnesty has demonstrated the force of my government. That act has calmed men's minds, weakened the influence of the bad passions, isolated more and more the projects of disorder. I have, in these auspicious circumstances, desired that the electoral colleges should be called together. My confidence in the country has not been misplaced. I feel assured that I shall find in you the firm support which I have received from the Chambers for seven years past, to secure to France the benefits of order and peace." These words were, in the circumstances, undoubtedly well founded; but the first division in the Chamber proved how strong, despite the general prosperity, the democratic feeling was in the bourgeois class, of which the majority of the constituencies was composed. The address, in answer to the speech from the throne, was indeed carried, after a stormy debate of three weeks' duration, by a majority of 100—the numbers being 216 to 116; a victory which exceeded the most sanguine hopes of the Ministerialists. And on the question of the secret-service money, which was a still truer touchstone of Government influence, the majority was

Jan. 12, 1838.

March 21.

CHAP. XXXIV.

1838.

even more considerable—the numbers being 249 to 133. But on other occasions the state of parties was very different, and on one vital question the Government underwent a signal defeat. The vexed matter of a reduction of the interest of the public funds having been again brought forward, the majority for the Government proposal was carried in the Deputies by 251 to 145; but so great was the public clamour on the subject, that it was rejected in the Peers, notwithstanding the recent creation, by a majority of 124 to 34.[1]

June 26. [1] Moniteur, Dec. 19, 1837, March 22 and June 27, 1838; Ann. Hist. xxi. 3, 4, 107, 160; Cap. ix. 332.

7. Rapid growth of railway companies.

A matter of vast social importance, and far more momentous ultimate consequence than any of these party divisions, was brought forward by the Government in this session, and occupied the Chambers several months. This was the question of RAILWAYS, and whether they should be left, as in England, to the enterprise and direction of private companies, or taken at once into the hands of Government, and regulated, like the Post-office and the Chaussées, by its direction. This question could no longer be avoided, for the demand for more rapid and useful modes of conveyance was rapidly developing in all quarters; and the growth of capital in the country, joined to the increased confidence in the stability of Government, had not only provided ample funds for the construction of the lines, but inflamed to a very high degree the mania for speculation in them. The societies which proposed to undertake them were established on the principle of *commandite*, or limitation of the liability of partners to the stock subscribed, which, as it lessened the risk of such undertakings, increased the favour with which they were regarded by small capitalists, and the avidity with which, as a matter of speculation, the shares were sought after by the public. In the two months of January and February 1838, no less than sixty-seven societies of this description were set up, with the requisite legal formalities, in France, with a subscribed capital of 118,222,000 francs (£4,730,000), divided into 219,212 shares; and in March the fever of

speculation had increased to such a degree, that companies with a capital of 274,572,000 francs (£11,000,000) were established in addition, divided into 399,635 shares. It may be readily conceived what important interests were at stake when undertakings so vast were suddenly brought forward, and how great must have been the public interest excited in their success, when numbers so immense had embarked their credit or their capital in their prosecution.[1] *

[1] Cap. ix. 380, 381.

8. M. Arago's Report on the railway lines.

M. Arago presented the report of the committee to whom the matter had been referred on the subject, which was drawn by himself, and, as might have been expected from such a hand, was a very able and luminous document. It proposed to establish a network of nine trunk-lines, whereof seven were to terminate in Paris, and to run from that capital to Belgium, to Havre, to Nantes, to Bayonne, to Toulouse, to Marseilles by Lyons, and to Strasbourg by Nancy. Two other lines were to unite Marseilles on the one side with Bordeaux by Toulouse, and on the other Bâle by Lyons and Besançon. In the mean time, however, only four lines were to be begun—viz. from Paris to Belgium, from Paris to Rouen, from Paris to Bordeaux by Orleans and Tours, and from Marseilles to Avignon, which were to embrace in all 373 leagues of railway. It was wisely proposed not to go

* The number of companies having movable and saleable shares in France was very large. From 1816 to 1838, the number was 1103, divided in the following manner:—

Journals and periodicals,	401
Manufactures,	93
Coaches and carriages,	93
Iron-works,	61
Internal navigation,	52
Banks,	40
Insurance companies,	27
Agricultural and draining,	23
Theatres,	24
Miscellaneous,	289
	1103

—CAPEFIGUE, *Dix Ans de Louis Philippe*, ix. 382, note.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1838.

farther in the mean time, both in order to test by experience, before going too deep, the probable success of the undertakings, and in order to be enabled to take advantage, in any future lines that might be constructed, of the improvements that might be adopted in the neighbouring states, and especially in England. It was not deemed expedient to undertake the formation of these lines on the part of Government, especially at a period when the budget was to be charged with 49,000,000 francs (£1,960,000) for canals, roads, and other improvements, and therefore they were to be left to private companies. Government, however, reserved to itself the right of requiring adequate security from the subscribers for the completion of the undertaking, and of preventing competing lines from interfering with the fair profits that might be expected from them. This report was adopted, with certain modifications, by the Chamber, and formed the foundation of the railway system in France. It were to be wished that an equally wise one had been simultaneously adopted in Great Britain.[1]

[1] M. Arago's Report, May 7, 1838; Ann. Hist. xxi. 161, 162; Moniteur, May 9, 1838.

9. General prosperity of the country.

It must be confessed that a more favourable time could not have been found for these undertakings, for an extraordinary flood of prosperity had set in upon France. The exports, imports, and revenue increased steadily during the three years subsequent to 1835; the public funds rapidly rose; and the national industry, sustained by a plentiful supply of the precious metals, and a liberal issue of paper by the Bank of France, diffused general ease and happiness over the community. The same effect took place then which had ensued in England upon the subsiding of the Reform agitation, though, from tranquillity being longer of being restored to the south than to the north of the Channel, the prosperity of France was two years later of becoming decided than that of England had been.[2] But when it did arrive, it was equally signal and progressive, and in like manner led to undertakings of the most extravagant kind, and a fever of speculation which re-

[2] Ann. Hist. xxi. 168-171; L. Blanc, v. 328-331.

called the days of Law and the Mississippi Scheme, a century before. A change in society, and the objects of general interest, came over France, so extraordinary that it could not be credited, were it not attested, as the former had been, by contemporary evidence of the most unquestionable description.*

10. Fever of speculation in France.

The thirst for gain, fed by the immense rise of the shares of some fortunate companies, and the colossal fortunes made by a few speculators, often without capital or apparent risk, led to a universal mania, seizing all classes of society. It swept away all heads, pervaded all ranks, and for a season almost absorbed all interests. It was difficult to say whether the sober shopkeeper, whose life had been spent in counting small gains, and pursuing a sober steadfast line of conduct — the zealous scholar, whose thoughts had been set on the contemplation of the ideal world — the intrepid soldier, who had hitherto dreamed only of visions of glory—or the volatile woman of fashion, who had hitherto glittered in the sunshine of rank and opulence, were most carried away by the torrent. All that was recounted in the memoirs of that former time, but hitherto hardly believed, of the prostration of all celebrities, the destruction of all feelings of pride, the oblivion of all the privileges of rank or sex, before the altar of Mammon, was now more than realised. Morning, noon, and night the offices of the bankers, merchants, or companies who had the shares of the undertakings most in request for sale, were besieged by files of carriages and

* Income, Expenditure, Exports, Imports, and Tonnage of France from 1837 to 1841, both inclusive.

Years.	Revenue. Francs.	Expenditure. Francs.	Exports. Francs.	Imports. Francs.	Tonnage inwards.
1837	1,027,572,203	1,027,059,018	758,097,450	807,792,965	1,494,580
1838	1,056,302,461	1,059,318,931	955,907,656	937,054,479	1,671,804
1839	1,051,880,917	1,021,082,404	1,003,331,788	946,971,426	1,244,092
1840	1,115,765,222	1,099,913,487	1,010,922,514	1,052,286,026	1,741,915
1841	1,211,885,666	1,187,842,234	1,065,375,603	1,121,424,216	1,823,360

—*Ann. Hist.* xix. 69; xx. 71, 75; xxi. 92; xxii. 59-61; xxiii. 94; xxiv. 60-61.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1838.

clamorous crowds pressing forward to acquire what they felt assured would, in a few weeks, without expenditure, trouble, or risk, put them in possession of an ample fortune. Ladies of the first rank and fashion hastened to bestow their smiles, and sometimes more than their smiles, on those who had the means of opening an early and secret door to the magic scenes, where riches, exceeding those at the disposal of the genii of the lamp and the ring, awaited the first fortunate entrant. And such was the astonishing rise of shares, sometimes to the amount of 1200 and 1500 per cent in a few months, that the expectations, extravagant as they were in many instances, were almost realised.[1]*

[1] L. Blanc, v. 328, 329; Cap. ix. 317, 336.

11. General frauds committed on the public.

Immeasurable were the frauds perpetrated on the credulous and senseless public during this brief period of general insanity. Mines which never existed became the subject of companies, the shares of which were, for a few weeks before the bubble burst, sold at extravagant profits. Inventions which had never been realised even in the brain of the most speculative mechanic, became the subject of eulogistic advertisement and eager purchase. France was inundated with impostures, which in many instances made the fortunes of their lucky fabricators. A dramatic piece got up at this period entitled *Robert Macaire*, which exposed the follies of the day, but at the same time turned into equal ridicule every generous or

* "Telle action constituée à 500 francs s'était élevée par la fiction du cours à 8000 francs."—Cap. ix. 335.

Public Funds in Paris and Bank Shares.

		Five per cents.	Actions de la Banque.
Jan.	1837	109	2430
Dec.		107	2560
Jan.	1838	109	2542
Dec.		110	2710
Jan.	1839	110	2650
Dec.		112	3000
Jan.	1840	112	3150
Dec.		111	3280
Jan.	1841	112	3260
Dec.		116	3420

—*Ann. Hist.* xx. 371; xxi. 419; xxv. 316.

elevated sentiment which could fill the human breast, was interdicted at the theatre from the immensity of its success. "Society had reached," says the annalist, "that point, the lowest in the scale of social degradation, when the selfish and degrading sentiments have ceased to be an object of shame even to those influenced by them, and the theatres are crowded to hear those feelings expressed as common and unavoidable, of which all are conscious in the recesses of their own breasts."[1]

[1] L. Blanc, v. 328, 329; Cap. ix. 333, 336.

12. Influence of the passion for gain on literature and the press.

The prevailing passion for gain comes soon to affect both the higher and the more ephemeral branches of literature. M. Guizot, whose great powers were not absorbed in the less durable objects of office, wrote three articles in the *Revue Française* on the state of society in France, which revealed its dangers, and displayed his usual impartiality and sagacity of thought. M. Lerminier abandoned his former extreme democratic opinions, and by several articles in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* in favour of Count Molé's government, incurred the lasting hostility of his former republican allies. At the theatres a number of popular pieces which fell in with the frivolity of the times attracted crowds to the comic boards, while the rising genius of RACHEL, who had made her first appearance on the stage, occasioned in some cultivated minds a reaction in favour of the elevated style of former tragedy. The young actress, however, met with a formidable rival in the *Caligula* of Alexander Dumas, which brought before the eyes of the admiring Parisians the manners of the Romans under the Empire, their armies, gladiators, and amphitheatre. History laboured with success to portray the glories of the Empire, as if to cry shame on the selfishness and frivolity of modern ideas; and we owe to that period many of the most remarkable works which characterise the era of Napoleon.[2] The universal object was to be amused or to make money; and the daily press, despairing of political change, adapted itself to the taste of its readers, and abandon-

[2] Cap. ix. 324-336. Personal observation.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1838.

ing the asperity of former political discussion, glided down the broad stream of social enjoyment or individual gain.

13. Change it induced in the system of government.

The effect of this change, which had occurred also nearly in a similar degree in Great Britain shortly before, was to remove in a most material degree the difficulties of Government. The passions of men having taken a different direction, and the thirst for individual gain having come to supersede that for political power, it became a comparatively easy task to manage them. Nothing was required but to adopt a prudent popular course of administration, which might eschew the resuscitation of the political passions, and meanwhile to disarm hostility by a plentiful diffusion of those advantages which had become the object of general and passionate desire. The immense patronage at the disposal of Government, which amounted to 140,000 offices in the civil service of the State, besides the commissions in the army and navy, gave them ample means of gratifying the prevailing thirst for gain; while the Chamber of Deputies and their constituents designated at once the channel in which the golden stream should flow. Influence, exerted not by the bestowing of bribes, as was the case for seventy years after the Revolution of 1688 by the Whig Government of England, but by the disposal of patronage, became the established means by which the administration of affairs was carried on; and the majority which it commanded, though sufficiently large on general questions, gave token of its origin when any change touching the pecuniary interests of the *bourgeoisie* was brought forward. Thus it threw out in the Peers the project of reducing the interest of the national debt, and took to itself from Government the administration of railways. This system has been openly admitted by M. Guizot, and defended on the footing of absolute necessity. When Government has neither the hereditary loyalty felt towards an ancient race of sove-

reigns to rest upon, nor the rude despotism of a soldier of fortune to enforce its mandates, it is compelled to have recourse to the thirst for individual gain, which never fails, after a time, to make itself felt in every community. This necessity was felt, and this effect followed, in England after the Revolution of 1688, and in France after that of 1830; and those who object to a government being established on such a basis, would do well to pause before they overturn that which rests on another.

14. Scandalous increase of corruption in France.

But although it may be easy to see how it happened that the government of corruption came after the Revolution in France to succeed that of force, yet the effects of the change were not the less injurious, or the less debasing to the national character of the people. The worst corruptions of the old monarchy anterior to the first Revolution were revived on a more extensive scale, and made to descend to and degrade a far greater number of men. The *pots de vin*, so well known as the *douceur* which followed the bestowing of an office on a minister, or a farmer-general of the revenue, came to be a regular and established part of almost every transaction, not only between Government and the people, but between all in authority or possessed of influence, and the recipients of what they had to bestow. Two celebrated trials which ere long occurred—that relating to the vessel "Ville de Paris," and another to the alleged maladministration of M. Gisquet, the Minister of Police—revealed in all their turpitude the base transactions of this venal period. It was judicially proved that, in consideration of shares allotted, money bestowed, mistresses bribed, actions promised, offices bestowed, political opposition was bought up; journals silenced, and men of powerful talent gained to the cause of Government, or the great railway or mercantile companies which shared with it the distribution of patronage.[1] So far did this system of universal corruption go, that it even tarnished the glory of that branch of the public service which had hitherto

[1] Cap. ix. 335, 336; L. Blanc, v. 329, 330; Moniteur, Aug. 23, 1838.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1838.

stood pre-eminent in purity as well as lustre; and the catastrophe attending the first attack on Constantine led to strange revelations in the mutual accusations of the generals, which it would have been well for the honour of the French arms to have buried in oblivion.

15. Position of Count Molé, and his attention to the Court.

The effect of this state of things was, that before the end of the session the Doctrinaire party, disgusted with the venality and corruption with which the Government was surrounded, diverged from Count Molé. The elder of the party were dissatisfied at not being admitted into the Administration, and the younger were alienated by the open establishment of government on the basis of venality and selfishness. Finding his position in the Chambers becoming more critical, Count Molé attached himself more strongly to the court; and in a magnificent fête given by him in his splendid chateau, and surrounded by his ancestral trees of Champlatreux, he was honoured by the presence of royalty, the queen, princes, and princesses. Everything there was redolent of the olden time: on the walls of the saloon were the pictures given by Louis XV. to one of Count Molé's ancestors; in the gardens were the marble fountains, shady alleys, and overflowing *jets d'eau* which recalled the splendour of Versailles. Surrounded here by the memorials and reminiscences of the past, in which he so much delighted, and basking in the fleeting sunshine of the present, the monarch felt for a brief period the enjoyment of real felicity, which was soon enhanced by the accouchement of the Duchess of Orleans, who on 24th August gave birth to a son and heir, who received the title of the Count of Paris, and promised to perpetuate in future times the new-born monarchy.[1]

Aug. 24. [1] Moniteur, Aug. 25, 1838; Cap. ix. 393, 394.

16. Statistics of the army, and social concerns.

The war establishment of 1838 and 1839 was fixed at a high standard, which the Chamber, alarmed by the first disaster of Constantine, voted without opposition. It amounted to 319,348 men, and 63,173 horses. Of this large force 38,000 men and 8779 horses were assigned to Africa. The men voted in Great Britain in the same

year for the army were to be 81,000 men, and 37,000 sailors for the royal navy; — forces miserably inadequate when the immensity of the force within a day's sale of the southern coast of England is taken into consideration. Some very curious facts were brought out in the debates in the Chamber on the state of the poor, and the proportion of legitimate to illegitimate births in Paris. It appeared that out of every 1000 births 316 were illegitimate, and that "33,000 orphans abandoned by their parents passed annually through the hospitals of the country." M. Lamartine, in an eloquent speech, declaimed against the measure in progress to suppress or diminish those establishments, which went to rescue from death or ruin the unhappy beings thus brought into the world only to encumber it. "Foundlings are for us," said he, "for all modern societies, one of those sacred necessities for which we must provide, if we would eschew a dissolution of morals, an inundation of crime and popular agitation, which no one can contemplate without trembling. Do not trust to those fatal measures which go only to conceal an evil which will immediately burst forth in other quarters. Insensate are they who are alarmed at the increase of population, if we take sufficient steps to implant and organise it. Man is the most precious of all capitals; and to those who are alarmed at its increase I would say, what would you be at? Are you prepared, as in China, to provide against the dreaded superabundance of population by immersing the children in rivers? It is a noble task to replace the care of a family for those unhappy children whom God has placed in your hands. That task the charity of St Vincent and the genius of Napoleon have rendered easy: you have nothing to do: beware lest you undo what they have done; rise superior to those who would inflict a mortal wound on the honour, the morality, the security of the country; recollect that there are higher duties than those of property or economy, and that those who are born have the right to live."[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxi. 193, 194; Moniteur, Feb. 17, 1838.

CHAP. XXXIV.

1838.

17. Last illness and death of Talleyrand. May 17.

While the Legislature was engaged with these important topics, public attention was for a brief period arrested by the last illness and death of a man who had played an important part on the theatre of nations in the last generation. On the 17th May, M. Talleyrand died. Arrived at the advanced age of eighty-two, his life had exceeded the ordinary term, and he retained his faculties to the last. Before his death, he had felt a desire to be reconciled to the Church to which he had originally belonged, and in which he had held the rank of bishop; and at the earnest entreaty of his young and beautiful relative, Mademoiselle de Dino, who watched his last days with pious care, he had on 10th March written a recantation of his errors, both religious and political, but which, with characteristic caution—an instance of "the ruling passion strong in death"—he kept by him, and only signed a few hours before his decease.* At the same time he addressed a penitent letter to the Pope, in which he professed his entire adherence to the tenets of the Romish Church. Shortly after signing his recantation, the King paid him a visit, and inquired anxiously after his health. "This," said the dying penitent, "is the highest honour my house has ever received." Books of devotion were frequently, at his own desire, in his hands during his long deathbed illness, one especially, entitled, "The Christian Religion studied in the true Spirit of its Maxims." "The recollections which you recall," said he to the Abbé Dupanloup, "are dear to me, and I thank you for having divined the place they have preserved in my thoughts and in my heart." Shortly before his death he received extreme unction; and on hearing

[1] Cap. ix. 407, 411; L. Blanc, v. 295-297; Ann. Hist. xxi. 181; Chron.

* "Touché de plus en plus par de graves considérations, conduit à juger de sangfroid *les conséquences d'une Révolution qui a tout entraîné*, et qui dure depuis cinquante ans, je suis arrivé au terme d'un grand âge, et après une longue expérience, *à blamer les excès du siècle auquel j'ai appartenu*, et à condamner franchement les graves erreurs qui dans cette longue suite d'années ont troublé et affligé l'Eglise Catholique, Apostolique, et Romaine, et auxquelles j'ai eu le malheur de participer."—*Dernière Pièce de* M. DE TALLEYRAND, May 17, 1838. CAPEFIGUE, ix. 468.

the names of Charles, archbishop of Milan, and Maurice, his patron saint, he said in a feeble voice, "Have pity on me." M. Dupanloup having related to him that the Archbishop of Paris had said, "I would give my life for M. de Talleyrand," "He might make a better use of it," replied the dying man; and with these words he expired. CHAP. XXXIV. 1838.

Belonging to, and celebrated in, another age, M. de Talleyrand had outlived his reputation and his influence; but he is too important an historical character to be permitted to depart this earthly scene without an obituary notice. That he was a man of remarkable abilities is sufficiently proved by his career: no man rises so high, even amidst the storms of a revolution, without the aid of those talents which are peculiarly adapted to the times in which he lived. It was to the possession of these talents that the ex-bishop of Autun owed his elevation, and the long duration of his influence through all the mutations of political fortune. He was neither a great nor a good man: had he been the first, his head would have been severed from his shoulders in the early part of his career; had he been the second, he never would have emerged into the perilous light of political, from the secure obscurity of ecclesiastical life. He was an accurate observer of the signs of the times, and a base accomplished time-server. It is such men who in general alone survive the storms of a revolution, and reap the fruits of the courage and magnanimity, the ambition or recklessness, of others. Essentially selfish and egotistical, he never hesitated to sacrifice his religion, his oaths, his principles, to the necessities or opportunities of the moment: adroit and supple, he contrived to make himself serviceable to all parties, and yet not the object of envenomed hostility to any. Having sworn fidelity to thirteen constitutions, and betrayed them all, he lost no character by his repeated tergiversations; no one expected consistency or honour from him, but all expected from him, and most *in power* received, valuable secret infor- 18. His character.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1838.

mation and useful time-serving. His manners were courteous, and had all the polish of the old school, and his colloquial powers constituted no inconsiderable part of his reputation. His memory, stored with anecdotes of the many eminent men of all parties with whom he had passed his life, rendered his conversation always amusing, often interesting; but there was nothing original in his ideas, or elevated in his conceptions. His celebrity as a talker, like that of Rochefoucauld's Maxims, arose chiefly from the casual felicity of expression and uniform tracing of all actions to the secret workings of selfishness in the human breast. Judging from themselves, both these far-famed observers were doubtless in the right. The reputation of Talleyrand was greater with his contemporaries, to whom his witty sayings were known, than it will be with posterity, which will form its opinions from his actions; and both conspire to demonstrate that intellectual powers, even of the highest kind, cannot compensate for the want of those still more lofty qualities which spring from the pure fountains of the heart.*

19. Conspiracy of Hubert.

This year brought to light another of those dark conspiracies which revealed the extreme hatred at Louis Philippe that pervaded the republican classes of society. On the 8th December 1837, a man, landing from the English packet-boat on the quay of Boulogne at ten at night, accidentally let fall a portfolio of papers. It was

* Some of M. de Talleyrand's sayings which have become most celebrated were not his own, or at least they had been said by others before him. That in particular which has made the round of the world, "The principal object of language is to conceal the thoughts," was probably original in him, for it exactly painted his mind; but it is to be found long before in several English authors. Thus in Young's *Night Thoughts*,—

"Where Nature's end of language is declined,
And men talk only to conceal their mind."

"The principal end of language," says Goldsmith, "according to grammarians, is to express our wants so as to receive a speedy redress. But men who know the world maintain very contrary maxims. They hold, and, I think, with some show of reason, that he who knows best how to conceal his necessities and desires, is the most likely person to find redress; and that the true *use of speech is not so much to express our thoughts as to conceal them.*"—GOLDSMITH'S *Bee*, No. iii., Oct. 20, 1769; Works, iii. 37.

picked up by one of the customhouse officers, and, not being claimed, opened to discover to whom it belonged and should be sent. It was found to contain several letters, particularly one signed "Stiegler," which seemed to indicate a conspiracy formed against the Government. It concluded with the words, "The whole *matériel* has been collected in Paris. I bring the plan which is desired." A man named Stiegler was upon this arrested, and in the crown of his hat was found the drawing of an infernal machine, similar to that which had proved so fatal in the hands of Fieschi when Marshal Mortier was killed. Some papers found on Stiegler, whose real name proved to be Hubert, led to the discovery of several accomplices in the plot; and in May 1838, Hubert, Mademoiselle Laure Gronville, Jacob Steublé, and several others, were brought to trial before the assize court of the department of the Seine at Paris. M. Emmanuel Arago, Favre Ferdinand Bruat, and several other counsel of eminence, conducted the defence; and the trial soon assumed that dramatic air, and produced those impassioned scenes, which at that period characterised all the state trials in France. The accused conducted themselves with a courage bordering on frenzy. It appeared that Mademoiselle Gronville was so ardent a character, that she alternately was engaged in the pious offices of a *sœur de la charité*, and occupied in dressing with flowers and funeral ornaments the tomb of Alibaud. The trial terminated in the conviction of Hubert, who was sentenced to transportation, and of Laure Gronville, Steublé, and several others, who were sentenced to five years' imprisonment. Laure Gronville died during her confinement, in a state of insanity.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxi. 162-180, 212, Chron.; L. Blanc, v. 343-348.

Louis Napoleon, as already mentioned, had returned from America in August 1837, to see his mother, the Duchess of St Leu, who was in a dying state. Although the prudent lenity with which he had been treated by Louis Philippe seemed to impose at least an implied

CHAP. XXXIV.

1838.

20. Louis Napoleon is obliged to leave Switzerland and come to England.

obligation on him to abstain from any attempt to disturb the Government of France, yet the Prince was too strongly impressed with the hope of ultimate success, and the belief of his mission, to abstain from the attempt to realise them. After the death of his mother, accordingly, he remained at Arenenberg, which again became the centre of political intrigues. There was drawn up a pamphlet, shortly after published by Lieutenant Laity at Paris, on the Strasbourg attempt, and which was so hostile to the existing Government that the author was brought to trial for it, and sentenced to five years' imprisonment, and to pay a fine of 10,000 francs (£500). The Cabinet of the Tuileries having received authentic intelligence that the young Prince was renewing his attempts to organise conspiracies in France, and to shake the fidelity of the army, addressed energetic remonstrances through their minister at Berne to the Swiss Government, calling on them to

Oct. 8, 1838.

remove Prince Louis Napoleon from their territories. This demand was warmly supported by Prince Metternich on the part of Austria. The demand was resisted by the whole strength of the united Republican and Napoleonist parties in Europe, and excited the warmest and most acrimonious debates in the Swiss Assembly, where the loudest declamations were heard against this "unheard-of stretch of tyrannic power." The strength of France and Austria, however, was too much for the Helvetic confederacy: the significant hint that the *débouche* for their cattle by the Ticino and the St Gothard would be closed if the demand was not complied with, was not lost on the Swiss farmers; and after some hesitation, the Government, in courteous but decided terms, intimated to the young Prince that he must select a new asylum.[1] * He

[1] Cap. ix. 429, 430; L. Blanc, v. 355-357; Ann. Hist. xxi. 213.

* "Après les évènemens de Strasbourg et l'acte de généreuse clémence dont Louis Napoléon Buonaparte avait été l'objet, le Roi des Français ne devait pas s'attendre à ce qu'un pays tel que la Suisse, et avec lequel les anciennes relations de bon voisinage avaient été naguère si heureusement rétablies, souffrirait que Louis Buonaparte revînt sur son territoire, et au mépris de toutes les obligations que lui imposait la reconnaissance, osât y renouveller de criminelles intrigues, et avouer hautement des prétentions insensées, et que leur folie

made choice of Great Britain, and arrived there early in November 1838. Great events were linked with this change of scene; it led to the Boulogne attempt, the captivity of five years in the chateau of Ham, and was indirectly instrumental in producing the alliance of France and England which has since wrought such wonders.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1838.

The cordial union of France and Austria on this attempt of Prince Napoleon led to the removal of the most serious apple of discord which still remained between them. It had never been intended by the French Government that the occupation of Ancona should be permanent; it had only been adopted as a temporary measure to counterbalance the influence of Austria in Tuscany and the Roman States. Now, however, this necessity had in a great measure ceased, and the troops employed in Ancona were loudly called for on the opposite coast of the Mediterranean. Italy was tranquil. An amnesty, with very few exceptions, had been wisely proclaimed by the Austrian Government on occasion of the coronation of the Emperor at Milan, as sovereign of the kingdom of Lombardy and Venice; and the attention of the French Government was so evidently absorbed by the affairs of Northern Africa, that no danger was to be apprehended from their ambitious designs in Italy. The moment, therefore, seemed favourable for the evacuation, and it was brought about without difficulty. The French Cabinet at first insisted on some stipulations in favour of the constitutional regime in the Legations being forced upon the Pope, but this was not

21. Evacuation of Ancona. Dec. 4.

Sept. 6, 1838.

même ne peut plus absoudre depuis l'attentat de Strasbourg. Il est de notoriété publique que Arenenburg est le centre d'intrigues que le Gouvernement du Roi a le droit et le devoir de ne pas tolérer. Vainement Louis Napoléon voudrait-il les nier; les écrits qu'il a fait publier tant en Allemagne qu'en France, celui que la Cour de Pairs a récemment condamné (Laity), auquel il était prouvé qu'il avait lui-même concouru, et qu'il avait distribué, témoignent, assez que son retour d'Amérique n'avait pas seulement pour objet de rendre les derniers devoirs à une mère mourante, mais aussi bien de reprendre des projets et d'afficher des prétentions auxquelles il est démontré aujourd'hui qu'il n'a jamais renoncé. La Suisse est trop loyale et trop fidèle alliée pour permettre que Louis Buonaparte se dise à-la-fois l'un de ses citoyens, et le prétendant au trône de France.—*Duc de* MONTEBELLO *au Gouvernement de la Suisse*, Oct. 8, 1838. CAPEFIGUE, ix. 429, 430. *Moniteur*, Oct. 10, 1838.

CHAP. XXXIV.

1838.

persisted in, as derogatory to his dignity as an independent power; and in the end an order from General Bernard, Minister of War at Paris, removed the little garrison of Ancona to Bona, on the opposite coast of Africa. The evacuation was made as quickly as possible, to avoid exciting the revolutionary party in Europe, and show the appearance of the French eagles openly receding before the Imperial standards.[1]

Oct. 25. [1] Cap. ix. 426, 427; Ann. Hist. xxi. 301; Moniteur, Oct. 28, 1838.

22. Affairs of Belgium.

While everything was peaceful in the south of Europe, and the evacuation of Ancona removed the last ostensible cause of difference between the French and Austrian Governments, affairs were embroiled in the north, and the senseless obstinacy of the revolutionary party in Belgium had well-nigh lighted up again the flames of a general war in Europe. The affairs of that State had been definitively settled by the capture of Antwerp in 1832, and subsequent treaty by which the limits of the new State were exactly defined. Leopold had signed that treaty, and accepted the twenty-four articles agreed to by the Conference at London. By them the territories of Limbourg and part of Luxembourg had been assigned to the King of Holland, in his right as Prince of Nassau, and member of the German Confederation. Upon various pretexts, however, the cession of these provinces to the Dutch authorities had been evaded, and they still remained in the hands of the Belgians. The disturbances in the Rhenish Provinces of Prussia, in consequence of the dispute between the Government and Archbishop of Cologne, relative to the religious education of the children of mixed marriages, already mentioned, now awakened new hopes in the leaders of the revolution in Flanders; they aspired to nothing less than uniting the Rhenish Provinces of Prussia with the newly-erected kingdom of Belgium, and forming a State which should be able to maintain its ground against either France on the one side, or Prussia on the other. The strong feeling in favour of the Romish Church which animated both countries,

appeared to form the basis of an indissoluble union. "The moment has come," said they, "when the idea of a *Rhenish-Belgian* Confederation will pass from Utopia to realisation. It had been already mooted in 1831 at Brussels. An advocate of Cologne, sufficiently authorised by the great body of the devoted and influential patriots of his country, made proposals to us of a union, which were prudently rejected by the equivocal or irresolute men who at that time were at the head of affairs. The moment has now come when it is possible to renew the ideas with far greater chances of success; to deliver ourselves for ever from all anxiety on the side of Prussia; to enter into a confederacy with a neighbouring people, whose strength will guarantee us from the double danger of a Prussian or a French invasion; to secure peace without commencing war, and to anticipate the necessity of a strife by exercising a propagandism incomparably more powerful than that of bayonets." [1]

[1] Cap. ix. 413-415.

23. Military preparations, and wild views of the Belgian republicans.

The prevalence of these ideas, which were strongly supported by the Catholic clergy, ever possessed of so great an influence in Flanders, explains the tenacity with which the revolutionary party there clung for so long a time to the possession of Limbourg and Luxembourg. These provinces were of some value in themselves, but they were of far more as a link to connect them with Cologne, the stepping-stone to the Rheno-Belgian Confederacy. In vain was it represented to these heated republicans that these provinces were part of the Germanic Confederacy, which would not yield them without a struggle, and could bring 300,000 men into the field. In vain did the Government point to the treaty to which the signature of the King was attached, which provided for the cession of these provinces to the King of the Netherlands. To the first it was replied that principles were more powerful than bayonets, and that the first approach of the German armies would be the signal for a general war of opinion, which would terminate in their entire discomfiture; to

CHAP. XXXIV. 1838.

the last, that treaties made by despots could not bind the free and enlightened Belgians. To such a length did the ferment proceed, that the Chamber of Deputies at Brussels, on the motion of M. Metz, the deputy for Luxembourg, adopted unanimously a resolution, praying the King not to consent to the separation of the provinces in dispute from Belgium, to which he returned an evasive answer.* Inflamed with these extravagant ideas, they, by their influence in the Chambers, forced warlike measures upon Leopold; and the Belgian enthusiasts, trusting to their tumultuary levies, ill disciplined and scarcely equipped, ventured, with a force which had sunk before the troops of Holland, to throw down the gauntlet to the united strength of Germany, France, and England.[1]

[1] Cap. ix. 415-417; Ann. Hist. xxi. 226, 227.

24. Views of the English Cabinet on the subject.

The great powers were now, however, united on the Belgian question, and the prospect of divisions in a more momentous interest made them all desirous to be done with its discussion. THE EAST had opened with its complicated interests and boundless prospects; the difficulty of solving its questions was present to every mind; and the cabinets, anticipating a coming struggle in the Levant, were all desirous of leaving no source of disquietude behind them on the banks of the Rhine. All parties were tired of the Belgian question, and desirous, with a view to a more momentous struggle, to be done with it. "I have seen Lord Palmerston," said General Sébastiani, the French ambassador in London, "and he is desirous, with the English Government, to arrange on any terms the Belgian question, in order to be able to give his whole attention to the affairs of the East." Count Molé, in reply, enjoined the General to endeavour to obtain a

* "Sire! En 1831 des circonstances malheureuses menaçaient la Belgique, du douloureux sacrifice de nos frères du Limbourg et du Luxembourg; peut-il se consommer aujourd'hui que sept années d'existence commune les ont attachés à la Belgique? La Chambre, Sire, ose espérer que dans les négotiations à ouvrir pour le traité avec la Hollande, l'intégrité du territoire Belge sera maintenue."—*Moniteur*, May 17, 1838.

modification of the territorial cessions to Holland; and Sébastiani's answer was: "I have again seen Lord Palmerston, but I could not prevail on him to modify the views of the English Cabinet. King Leopold must accept, purely and unconditionally, the twenty-four articles." The German powers, through M. Bresson, the French ambassador at Frankfort, wrote in like manner, that no modification of the treaty as to the frontier was possible, and that Austria, Prussia, and Russia would insist on the full payment of the indemnity stipulated to Holland by Belgium. An official announcement to the same effect was made to the Belgian Government, in the strongest terms, by Russia and Prussia.[1] *

[1] Plenipo. de France, Grande Bretagne, and de Prussie, à la Ambassadeurs de la Belgique, Nov. 28, 1838; Cap. ix. 417, 418.

25. Obstinacy of the Belgians, and military preparations of France and Prussia.

Notwithstanding these decided remonstrances from the great powers which surrounded them on all sides, the Belgian Chambers still held out. Their reliance was on the numerous malcontents in the very countries from whom these remonstrances emanated. They were in close communication with the secret societies and republicans of France, who, although quiescent at the moment, were unceasingly carrying on their dark machinations: they relied on the profound feeling of discontent occasioned by the religious dispute in the provinces of Rhenish Prussia, and fomented in Ireland by the efforts of O'Connell

* "Les Soussignés, plénipotentiaires d'Autriche et de Prusse, conjointement avec ceux de la France, la Grande Bretagne, et la Russie, ont remarqué avec regret, dans les actes publics qui viennent de paraître à l'ouverture des Chambres Législatives à Bruxelles, un langage annonçant hautement le dessein de se refuser à la restitution des territoires qui d'après le second des 24 articles arrêtés par la Conférence de Londres, le 18 Octobre 1831, doivent continuer à appartenir au Grand Duché de Luxembourg, ainsi que de la partie de la province de qui, conformément au quatrième des dits articles, doit appartenir à sa Majesté le Roi des Pays-Bas, soit en sa qualité de Grand-Duc de Luxembourg, soit pour être réunie à la Hollande,—actes contre lesquels le Gouvernement Belge a omis faire valoir les engagemens contractés par un traité solennel, et les droits d'un tiers qui s'y oppose! Egalement, les Soussignés peuvent d'autant moins s'empêcher de voir dans ces manifestations une atteinte portée aux droits de la Confédération Germanique, qu'elles émanent d'une partie qui ne se trouvant que dans une possession provisoirement tolérée des territoires mentionnés, prétend de son propre chef convertir le fait de cette possession en un droit permanent, ce qui constitue dans le présent cas, un envahissement implicite. SEM. BULOW."—CAPEFIGUE, ix. 417, 418, note.

CHAP. XXXIV.

1838.

and the Catholic Association; and they trusted to the co-operation of the English Radicals, whose ranks had been immensely swelled by the general suffering which had long prevailed from the contraction of the currency, and the numerous strikes among workmen in consequence of the fall of wages resulting from it, which amounted to little short of open insurrection. In a word, the Belgian republicans counted on a general revolt and war of opinion in all the States with which they were surrounded; and not without reason, for now, for the first time in history, by a strange combination of circumstances, the Papacy and Democracy were drawing in the same direction. In spite of all the warnings they had received, the Belgian Chambers abated nothing of their haughty spirit, and their military preparations continued without intermission. The allied powers in consequence also took up arms. A French army 25,000 strong was collected at Compiègne, and 30,000 Prussians were concentrated on the Meuse. Still the Belgian Chambers stood firm. "France," said M. Simmons, the deputy of Limbourg in the Chamber, "can never see with indifference a people sacrificed at its gates, which has lent it the hand. It is time to enter into more energetic relations with France and England, and, if their Governments abandon us, to appeal to the people."[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxi. 226-230; Cap. ix. 416-420, x. 17.

26. Failure of the Bank of Brussels, and settlement of the question.

Everything breathed hostility, and possibly, notwithstanding the apparent hopelessness of the contest, a European war of opinion might have arisen at this period, instead of ten years later, when it was averted by an event which, although the natural consequence of the monetary crisis which was now producing such distress in England, had not been anticipated by the party which was calculating on its effects, and utterly disabled them from carrying their designs into execution. This was the failure of the Bank of Brussels, which took place when the political crisis was at its height, and at once deprived the malcontents of their resources and means of action. For once insolvency produced effects the very

Nov. 14, 1838.

reverse of those with which it generally is attended; it became the herald of peace, not the harbinger of war. In a manufacturing and industrious community, where credit was the soul of enterprise, and an adequate currency was the life-blood of the nation, the effects of this failure were incalculable. They were much enhanced by the failure of the Savings' Bank of Brussels, which immediately after ensued, and which was only appeased by the Government instantly and wisely coming forward and guaranteeing the sums in the Savings' Bank, which amounted to 1,500,000 florins (£150,000). This seasonable relief, however, only assuaged the terrors of the working classes; it did not restore the credit of their employers, which, participating in the monetary crisis, then at its height in England, was violently shaken. In these circumstances, to maintain the contest further on the part of Belgium was impossible. Silence succeeded to the vehement declarations of the tribune, and the Belgian standards were quickly replaced by the Dutch in the disputed territory. On December 11, a fresh protocol was signed at London by the representatives of the four great Powers, by which it was stipulated that Holland should renounce all claim to the arrears of the 8,400,000 florins (£840,000) agreed to be paid to her by Belgium, from the day on which the adhesion was given, and the payments in future be reduced to 5,000,000 (£500,000). The territorial limits were left as before. This protocol was immediately accepted by the King of Holland, and on 18th February 1839 it was presented for acceptance by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Belgian Chamber.[1] A violent opposition was made,* but at length the necessity of the case prevailed; the merchants

Dec. 11.

[1] Protocol, Dec. 11, 1838; Moniteur, Dec. 13; Treaty, April 19, 1839; Ann. Hist. xxii. 255, 267, 278, App. to Chron.; L. Blanc, v. 388, 389.

* "Notre cause est celle des peuples; ils se lèveront en masse pour nous soutenir. Le premier coup de canon tiré en Europe sera le signal d'une conflagration générale. L'exemple sera dangereux pour l'absolutisme, qui redouterait le bien-être d'une nation vivant sous un régime de liberté. Dans l'intérêt de mon pays, et pour le repos de ma conscience, je vote contre le projet."—*Paroles de M. le Comte de* REYNIE, *Ann. Hist.*, xxii. 267.

CHAP. XXXIV.

1839.

of Ghent, Liege, and Antwerp represented that they would be ruined by war; the Finance Minister admitted the public funds could not support it; and on the 18th March the adhesion to the treaty was carried by a majority of 58 to 42. It was immediately afterwards signed by the Belgian minister, and the Belgian question, at one time so threatening to Europe, finally set at rest.

Mar. 18, 1839.

27. Differences of France and Mexico. Nov. 27, 1838.

The foreign transactions of France in this year were signalised by an event honourable to the French arms, as well as creditable to their vigour, and which went far to raise the prestige of the kingdom in the eyes of foreign nations. This was the successful bombardment of ST JUAN D'ULLOA in Mexico, by a fleet under the command of Admiral Baudin, under whose orders the King's youngest son, the Prince de Joinville, made his first essay in arms. The French Government had become involved in a serious dispute with the Mexican, in consequence of some piratical acts committed on French subjects by the inhabitants, and a refusal on the part of their government to admit the French to the privileges enjoyed by other nations. Negotiations having failed to produce any effect on those hot-headed republicans, who were as ignorant of the strength of their enemies as they were incapable of developing any of their own, a squadron, consisting of three line-of-battle ships, La Néréide, La Gloire, and L'Iphigénie, the Creole frigate, and two bomb-vessels, approached Vera Cruz; and not having succeeded in bringing the Mexican authorities to terms, Admiral Baudin prepared for an immediate attack on the fort of St Juan d'Ulloa, which commanded the entry to that town. The vessels approached the fort at 2 P.M., and opened their fire. Such was the vigour of the cannonade that at six the white flag was hoisted, the walls being a mere heap of ruins. During the four hours that the fire lasted, the five ships engaged threw 8000 round shot and 520 bombs into the place:[1] the Iphigénie alone, from its broadside of 50 guns, threw 3400 balls, or, on an average,

[1] Traite, Nov. 28, 1838; Ann. Hist. xxii. 129; App. to Chron. and 227; Cap. x. 15; L. Blanc, v. 370; Moniteur, Dec. 24, 1838.

fourteen a-minute, during the whole time! Not content with this success, Admiral Baudin landed a strong body of marines, under the command of the Prince de Joinville, which, advancing towards Vera Cruz, soon compelled the submission of that city. It was stipulated that all the Mexican troops, excepting a thousand, should leave the city, and the French evacuate St Juan d'Ulloa, and the privileges contended for by the French for their subjects were conceded.

28. Reflections on the attack of land defences by sea forces.

The experience of war has not yet determined whether or not the improvements of fortification, which have been so signal of late years, especially among the Russians, have enabled works at land successfully to resist the most formidable attacks from ships. Many considerations may be urged, and many examples cited, on both sides. On the one hand, it is certain that a powerful three-decker of one hundred or one hundred and twenty guns can concentrate a weight of metal, in her broadsides, superior, at short range of one hundred or one hundred and twenty yards, to any battery, even of three tiers, which can be brought to bear upon it, and that the splintering of stone from ordinary embrasures is more dangerous to life than from the wooden sides of a ship. Add to this, that, by the application of steam to ships of war, a concentrated fire from several vessels can be brought to bear on a single bastion; and the flank fire of other bastions can be taken off till the requisite impression is produced on the main point of attack, by the fire of the ships specially charged with that part of the undertaking. On the other hand, a three-decker, which will burn or sink, seems hardly a match for a stone bastion which will neither burn nor sink; and the skill of the Russian engineers has discovered the means of protecting the mouth of the gun, by net-works of ropes and other defences, from almost every danger, except round shot of heavy calibre, and left only an aperture a few inches in diameter for the sight of the commander of the gun.

CHAP. XXXIV.

1839.

29. Instances on each side.

The examples of this species of attack are almost equally divided. Two instances occurred during the war, three after it, but none of them can be considered as altogether decisive. Nelson's attack on Copenhagen was an assault on a strong naval line of defence, supported by heavy batteries; but the principal contest was with the ships, and the Trekroner battery was unsubdued at the close. The bombardment of Flushing in 1809 was a joint land and sea operation, which was headed on the latter side by Sir R. Strachan with seven sail of the line; and it was to the effect of the fire of the ships, which was kept up, as the French governor expressed it, "with uncommon vigour," for four hours, that the necessity of capitulating was by him mainly ascribed. The attack on Algiers, in 1816, by Lord Exmouth, was entirely successful, though with very heavy loss; but the besieged there were Turks, not Europeans; and their allowing the English to come in and take up their stations within pistol-shot of the batteries without firing a shot, proved that, however individually brave, the Mussulmans at that period were little skilled in the art of defence. The capture of Acre by Admiral Stopford and Sir Charles Napier was a lucky accident, owing to the casual blowing-up of the Egyptian magazine; and that of St Juan d'Ulloa by Admiral Baudin can hardly be considered as an instance in point, as the defenders of the fortress were Mexican revolutionists, not European soldiers.

30. Instances from the present war.

During the war in after times with Russia, the instances of this species of warfare present an equally indecisive result. The capture of Bomersund cannot be ascribed to the navy, for it was effected, not by the ships, but by six guns on shore, planted within 600 yards. The successful bombardment of Sweaborg was effected, with scarcely any loss, by the gun-boats and mortar-vessels having artillery on board, which threw shells at 4500 yards into the town when almost beyond the reach of the Russian guns; and as it was, though great damage

was done in the inside of the town, not a defence was injured, and hardly a gun dismounted in the place. The failure of the allied fleets with an immense force before Sebastopol on the 17th October 1854, despite the signal gallantry of Sir Edmund Lyons and the ships under his command, seems a weighty precedent against the possibility of successful naval attack; but it cannot be considered decisive, because the shallowness of the water before Fort Constantine compels the vessels to anchor at nine hundred yards' distance, the most advantageous range for land batteries, and the least for naval fire, which is most powerful at short distances. The fort of Kinburn was crushed in an hour by the concentric fire of the allied floating-batteries and mortar-vessels; but the attacking force was there overwhelming, and the Russians had only sixty-six guns on the bastions of the besieged fortress.

31. Probable conclusion on the subject.

Where considerations and precedents are so equally divided, it seems difficult for any one, especially not one professionally versed in such matters, to form a decided opinion on the subject. Possibly experience may ere long resolve it one way or other. So far as conclusions can be safely drawn from what has already occurred, it would rather appear that powerful ships of the line, if they can approach *near enough*, are more than a match for the ordinary fortresses hitherto constructed in war; but that, if either they cannot get near, or the fortress is defended in the new Russian fashion—that is, with the guns entirely covered save at the mouth, and three guns of the same calibre lying under cover beside each to replace such as may be disabled, and an ample supply of men to supply the gaps of the killed and wounded—the chances are very great that the vessels will be sunk or burnt before the batteries are silenced. With regard to bombardment from *a distance* with mortars and bombs, the case seems to be different. If a number of such vessels, propelled by steam, and firing as they move,

CHAP. XXXIV. 1839.

commence a bombardment at four thousand yards, the mark presented to the land-batteries is so small compared with that to which the fire of the ships is directed, that fifty shots will take effect on the one side for one on the other. This mode of attack, however, leaves the real defences uninjured, however fatal to the magazines or buildings within range; and even that danger may be avoided, in a military point of view, by having the magazines under bomb-proof cover, or so far off as to be beyond the range of the ships' guns.

32. Coalition against, and dissolution of the Chambers.

The session of 1838 was closed without any further incident, for the state of parties was such as to render any measure of importance impossible. A coalition had been formed between the Gauche and the Centre Gauche, which rendered the majority for Government on any material question doubtful, if not hopeless. When the Chambers met, the coalition presented a very formidable aspect, and the Government received convincing proof of its strength from the divisions on the president's chair. M. Dupin, the Opposition candidate, had 183 votes; M. Passy, the Ministerialist, only 178. A long and animated debate ensued on the Address, and it was carried by a majority only of 13, the numbers being 221 to 208. This majority, however, was so small that it revealed the approaching downfall of the Government, and they resolved accordingly to have recourse to the last resource of a dissolution, which was done by ordonnance of 31st January. But their condition, so far from being improved, was rendered much worse by this step, for the calculations made on the result of the elections showed a majority of 50 for the Opposition.[1] * In these circum-

Dec. 19, 1838.

Jan. 21, 1839.

Jan. 31. Mar. 13.

[1] Ann. Hist. xxii. 6, 102, 103; Cap. x. 25, 26; Moniteur, Jan. 22 and 31, 1839.

* Statistique de la Nouvelle Chambre, 1838.

Opposition.		Ministeriels.	
Députés restés,	192	Députés restés,	183
„ nouveaux,	62	„ nouveaux,	22
	254		205

Majorité de l'Opposition, 49.

—Capefigue, x. 25, 26.

stances the Ministry felt it was all over, and they accordingly threw up their situations, and their resignations were finally accepted.

33. Ministerial crisis, and attempt to form a Liberal Administration.

A long and painful interregnum ensued upon this change, which was only at last terminated by another of those insurrections which had so often reunited parties and strengthened the hands of Government. The avowed object of the coalition which had now obtained the command of the Chamber, was to force their own policy upon the King, to terminate the individual direction which the capacity of Louis Philippe had for years enabled him to assume, and to realise their favourite maxim, "Le Roi règne, et ne gouverne pas." Unwilling as the King was to adopt such a system, he had no alternative, for by no other Ministry than that which embraced it could a majority in the Chamber be obtained, and he accordingly, by the advice of Marshal Soult, whom he consulted on the occasion, sent for M. Thiers. This aspiring leader of the Centre Gauche, however, was too ambitious, and felt too strongly the advantage of his present position, not to turn it to the best advantage, and the negotiation with M. Guizot and the Doctrinaires broke off from his declining to give that very eminent man the position to which he was entitled in the Ministry.* He submitted to the King a series of propositions as the conditions of his adhesion, which went to change in a fundamental manner the existing system of government. The first was that the King was henceforward to abstain from any direct or personal interference with his Government, and to act only through his responsible Ministers; the second, that a certain qualified interposition in favour of the Liberal Government in Spain was to be permitted; the third, that

Mar. 17.

* "Si M. Odillon Barrot," dit M. Guizot, "veut le Ministère de l'Intérieur, je le lui cède, à condition qu'on me donnera la Présidence de la Chambre. Est-ce trop exiger? La coalition a trois chefs, et j'en suis un: il y a trois grandes positions à occuper, et je ne demande que celle dont MM. Barrot et Thiers ne voudront pas; rien de plus légitime."—LOUIS BLANC, v. 396.

CHAP. XXXIV.

1839.

M. Odillon Barrot was to be selected as President of the Chamber, and M. Dupont de l'Eure obtain a seat in the Court of Cassation. The King, yielding to necessity, was inclined to have accepted these conditions;* but, on the other hand, this concession disconcerted Marshal Soult and M. Guizot, who were by no means inclined to go such lengths in favour of the Gauche, and still clung to the idea that, by means of a skilful selection of Ministers, it might be possible to form a combination of the Centre and Centre Droit, which should command a majority in the Chamber. The result was that the negotiation with M. Thiers and the Centre Gauche went off; and on the recommendation of M. Guizot and the chiefs of the Doctrinaires, who insisted that a provisional cabinet should be nominated to try the temper of the Chamber on this point, which could not be done without a cabinet, a Ministry avowedly temporary only was appointed.[1] †

March 31.

[1] Moniteur, March 31, 1839; Ann. Hist. xxii. 102, 103; Cap. x. 32, 33.

34. Vain attempts to form a Ministry.

The position of the interim cabinet, when the Chamber met again, was not such as to inspire any well-founded hope that a government formed of the Centre and Droit could command a majority. On the 16th April a division took place on the question of the presidency of the Chamber, and on that occasion the Conservatives voted for M. Passy, in the hope of detaching him from the Gauche; and the manœuvre proved so far successful that he obtained 225 votes, while M. Odillon Barrot had only 193. In consequence of this division, a fresh attempt was made to form a ministry, from which both M. Guizot

* "Mon cher M. Thiers,—J'ai été appelé ce matin par le Roi, au moment où vous m'adressiez votre lettre: *le Roi accepte toutes les conditions du programme, qui lui a été remis.* J'ai même été étonné, d'après ce qui s'était passé hier, de trouver sa Majesté dans une disposition semblable."—*Maréchal* SOULT *à* M. THIERS, March 20, 1839. CAPEFIGUE, x. 30.

† Ministère du 31 Mars, 1839:—M. Gasparin, Pair de France, Ministre de l'Intérieur; Girod de l'Ain, Pair de France, Justice et Cultes; Le Duc de Montebello, Affaires Etrangères; General Dupans Cubières, Guerre; M. Parant, Instruction Publique; M. Gautier, Finance.—*Moniteur*, 31st March 1839.

and M. Odillon Barrot were excluded: M. Thiers was Minister for Foreign Affairs. This arrangement was very near succeeding, and on 29th April the Carrousel was filled with a crowd expecting to see the new Ministers, for whom carriages were in waiting, make their entry to the Tuileries. But the hours passed, and no one appeared; and at length M. Dupin announced that the negotiation had broken off, from the parties, through mutual jealousy, being unable to agree on a president of the council, without whom neither would have a majority in the Cabinet. Upon this everything was thrown adrift, and the public anxiety redoubled. "At the time of the contest of Pitt and Fox," said the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, "England was some weeks without a ministry, and the crisis would have continued longer, had not George III., worn out with their difficulties, declared he would go to Charing Cross, and take for ministers the first seven gentlemen he met." Possibly Louis Philippe might have been reduced to a similar necessity, had not the crisis been terminated by an unexpected event, which diffused general consternation, and for a time stifled the jealousy of parties by the dread of another revolution.[1]

[1] L. Blanc, v. 466-468; Cap. x. 31-34; Ann. Hist. xxii. 106, 107.

35. La Société des Familles. Its organisation.

Unknown to the police, unsuspected by the Government, a society had long existed in Paris, which was of the more dangerous character that its proceedings were conducted with secresy and caution. It began in 1834, after the suppression of the insurrections of that year. It was entirely military in its organisation and plans, and proposed to overturn the Government, not by the press or influencing opinion, but by force, kept carefully concealed till the moment for action had arrived. The better to conceal its designs, it was styled La Société des Familles, and professed to be entirely occupied with projects of mutual succour and assistance. Like all the other secret societies of that period, it obeyed the orders of an unseen and unknown authority. The unit of the association consisted of six members, who

CHAP. XXXIV.

1839.

received the name of a "family;" six families, which obeyed one chief, formed a "section;" and three sections formed a "quarter." The chiefs of the "quarters" took their instructions from a "revolutionary agent," who was the instrument for conveying the orders of an unknown committee which directed the whole. The operations of this secret society had been so vigorous, that in the beginning of 1836 it contained twelve hundred men, for the most part of the most intrepid and dangerous character. It had collected several depôts of ammunition, and formed dangerous ramifications in two of the regiments stationed in Paris.[1] *

[1] Hist. des Sociétés Secretes, ii. 19, 26; L. Blanc, v. 410, 411.

In spite, however, of all the precautions taken to insure

* The oath taken by the entrants into this society was in these terms:— "Au nom de la République, je jure haine éternelle à tous les Rois, à tous les Aristocrates, à tous les oppresseurs de l'humanité. Je jure dévouement absolu au Peuple, fraternité à tous les hommes, hors les aristocrates. Je jure de punir les traîtres. Je promets de donner ma vie, de monter sur l'échafaud, si ce sacrifice est nécessaire pour amener le règne de la souveraineté du peuple et de l'égalité. Que je sois puni de la mort des traîtres, que je sois percé de ce poignard, si je viole mon serment."—*Histoire des Sociétés Secretes*, ii. 56; and CAPEFIGUE, x. 48, note.

Those about to be initiated were subjected to the following interrogatories:— "Que penses-tu du Gouvernement actuel?—Qu'il est traître au peuple de ce pays. Dans quel intérêt fonctionne-t-il?—Dans celui d'un petit nombre de privilégiés. Quels sont aujourd'hui les aristocrates?—Ce sont les hommes d'argent, les banquiers, les fournisseurs, monopoleurs, gros propriétaires, agioteurs; en un mot, les exploiteurs qui s'engraissent aux dépens du peuple. Quel est le droit en vertu duquel ils gouvernent?—La force. Quel est le vice dominant dans la société?—L'égoïsme. Qu'est ce qui tient lieu d'honneur, de probité, de vertu?—L'argent. Quel est l'homme qui est estimé dans le monde?—Le riche et le puissant. Quel est celui qui est méprisé, persecuté, et mis hors la loi?—Le pauvre et le faible. Que penses-tu du droit d'octroi, des impôts sur le sel, et sur les boissons?—Ce sont des impôts odieux, destinés à pressurer le peuple en épargnant les riches. Qu'est ce que le peuple?—Le peuple est l'ensemble des citoyens qui travaillent. Comment est-il traité par les lois?—Il est traité en esclave. Quel est le sort du prolétaire sous le gouvernement des riches?—Le sort du prolétaire est semblable à celui du serf et du nègre; sa vie n'est qu'un long tissu de misères, de fatigues, et de souffrances. Quel est le principe qui doit servir de ban à une société régulière?—L'égalité. Faut-il faire une révolution politique, ou une révolution sociale?—Il faut faire une révolution sociale. Nos tyrans ont proscrit la Presse et l'Association, c'est pourquoi notre devoir est de nous associer avec plus de persévérance que jamais, et de suppléer à la Presse par la propagande de vive voix, car les armes que les oppresseurs nous interdisent sont celles qu'ils redoutent le plus, et que nous devons surtout employer."—CAPEFIGUE, *Dix Ans de* LOUIS PHILIPPE, x. 53, 54.

entire secresy, the police got a clue to this association; several of its chiefs were arrested, and an attempt at open insurrection failed. The society in consequence was dissolved, and its members reunited in a new one under the name of the Société des Saisons, which professed to be entirely occupied with fruits and flowers, and the varied productions of the earth in all seasons. In that society, which, like the former, was entirely of a military character, it was determined, on the motion of M. Martin Bernard, to have frequent reviews of the forces of the society, sometimes in one place, sometimes in another, always in the dark, and with the utmost secresy, without any one knowing, till an hour before the orders were given, where they were to meet. It was resolved also that there should be no depôts of ammunition, which only excited suspicion, and were liable to detection; but that when the moment for action had arrived, it should be distributed in small quantities by trusty agents to the members in their march to their different rallying-points. Manufactories of cartridges, however, were going on, and one was discovered in 1838 by the police; but so skilfully was the design managed, that they got no clue to the chiefs or centre of the conspiracy. In April 1839 the society had one thousand armed men on its rolls, and twelve thousand cartridges distributed in small magazines, and it was directed by Armand Barbès, an enthusiastic chivalrous young man; Martin Bernard, a resolute determined soldier; Blanqui, an ardent conspirator, and several other persons of lesser note but similar character. Such was the spirit with which they were animated, that the cry was unanimous among the conspirators for immediate action, and not a doubt remained among them that decisive success would attend their first insurrection.[1]

36. Which is changed into the Société des Saisons.

[1] L. Blanc, v. 411, 412; Hist. des Sociétés Secrets, ii. 36-41.

The insurrection began on the 12th of May, the conspirators calculating, not without reason, that during the interregnum of the Ministry the resistance of Govern-

CHAP. XXXIV.

1839.

37. Insurrection of May 12, which is suppressed.

ment could not be so formidable as might otherwise be apprehended. The insurrectionists assembled first in the Rue l'Abbé, where a gunsmith's shop was broken open, and the corps were speedily armed. Followed by a band of devoted followers, Barbès moved, amidst cries of "Vive la République" and the chorus of the "Marseillaise," to the Palais de Justice, where he summoned the officer in command to surrender, and upon his refusal he was shot dead. The post was then carried; but the alarm being now given, the prefecture of police was put in a posture of defence, and troops began to arrive from all sides. By a sudden rush, however, the conspirators succeeded in making themselves masters of the Hôtel de Ville, where Barbès with a loud and firm voice read his proclamation. At the same time a bold attack made them masters of the Place St Jean, and the united corps proceeded to the Mairie of the 7th Arrondissement. But the troops and National Guard now crowded in on all sides; the alarm was spread through the whole town, the *générale* beat in all the streets; the conspirators, feeling their enterprise hopeless, gradually slipped off, and at length they were reduced to three hundred, who retreated into the narrow streets in the neighbourhood of the Rue Transnonain and the Cloître de St Méri. In the midst of their blood-stained pavements the "Marseillaise" was heard chanted in mournful strains, and the utmost efforts were made to strengthen the position. Three barriers were erected in the Rue Trinitat; but the conspirators in raising them only dug their own graves. They were speedily surrounded on all sides, and forced to surrender. The chiefs were nearly all wounded; Barbès was taken with his hands black with powder, and his figure covered with blood from a wound in his head.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxii. 225, 226; Moniteur, May 13 and 14, 1839; L. Blanc, v. 415-417; Cap. x. 35-37.

The immediate effect of this audacious enterprise was to terminate the ministerial crisis. Matters had become too serious to admit of any further delay; the jealousies of chiefs, the ambition of parties, yielded to the stern reality

of danger. The *bourgeoisie*, terrified for their property, and disquieted by these repeated and alarming breaches of the public peace, rallied, as they had so often done before, around the throne. The King felt the necessity of a firm and intrepid ministry, with an undaunted soldier at its head, and he was not long of forming it. On the very day on which the insurrection broke out, and before the firing had ceased in the streets, an ordonnance was signed, appointing Marshal Soult President of the Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Duchatel Minister of the Interior, and M. Villemain Minister of Public Instruction.* Neither M. Guizot nor M. Thiers were in the Ministry, which, doubtless, diminished its strength; but the jealousy of these two rival chiefs had become such that the one could not be admitted without alienating the adherents of the other, and both, aspiring to the lead, would accept no inferior situation. The Cabinet was formed by a combination of the Centre with the Doctrinaires and a small fraction of the Centre Gauche.[1]

38. Second Ministry of Marshal Soult. May 12, 1839.

[1] Moniteur, May 13. 1839; Cap. x. 38, 39.

M. VILLEMAIN, who was now for the first time brought forward in the important situation of Minister of Public Instruction, was a man who had risen to eminence chiefly from the brilliant works with which he had adorned the literature of France. A peer of France, and attached both by family and connections to aristocratic society, he yet depended mainly on popular support, and was passionately desirous of retaining the suffrages of the reading multitude. He had all the sensitiveness to criticism and love of praise which is so often the accompaniment of genius, especially of a poetic or romantic kind. While this turn of mind, however, rendered his literary works charming, and eminently qualified him to produce the

39. Character of M. Villemain.

* Président du Conseil et Secrétaire des Affaires Etrangères, Maréchal Soult; Garde des Sceaux et Ministre de la Justice et des Cultes, M. Teste; Guerre, General Schneider; Marine et Colonies, l'Amiral Duperré; Intérieur, M. Duchatel; Commerce, M. Cunin-Gridaine; Travaux Publics, M. Dufaure; Instruction Publique, M. Villemain; Finances, M. Passy.—*Moniteur*, May 13, 1839.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1839.

beautiful sketches of French literature during the eighteenth century, and of contemporary character, which have given such celebrity to his name, it in a great degree impeded his ability as a minister, by producing a nervous apprehension of the press, and a feminine desire of approbation inconsistent with the insensibility to everything but the calls of duty, which forms the noblest feature of the masculine character, and is more than anything called for in a minister of state in troubled times. He had acquired great popularity at the tribune of the Peers by his eloquent declamations in favour of the independence of Poland, and against the laws of September 1834, but on that very account he was the less qualified to have a share in holding the helm in troubled times. Like Mr Canning, he looked more to the immediate applause of the newspapers than to the ultimate consequences of his actions, or the lasting opinion of thinking men,—a weakness common to him with most others who live on the breath of public applause, and one which so often disqualifies literary men from taking a place proportioned to their genius in the government of mankind.

40. State of parties after this change.

The formation of this Cabinet, in a manner, cast the parties in the Chamber in a new mould, and drew the line more distinctly and irrevocably between them. M. Thiers became the avowed leader of the Gauche and Centre Gauche, and he aspired to nothing less than the premiership, with a cabinet of his .own formation, including M. Odillon Barrot. It was foreseen that the age and infirmities of Marshal Soult would disable him from long holding his present arduous post, and at any rate he was more a man of action than words, and better fitted to subdue an insurrection in the streets by grape-shot than win a majority in the Chamber by persuasive language. M. Guizot was the man to whom the Conservatives of all shades in the Legislature now looked to form the future head of an anti-revolutionary cabinet, and combat demo-

cracy in the Chamber, and with its own weapons of declamation and eloquence. The press followed this now decided line of demarcation of parties. The *National* declaimed violently against the ministerialists, and accused M. Odillon Barrot of having deserted his principles, and become lukewarm in the cause of democracy, since he had the prospect of a place in the Cabinet, and the *Siècle* and *Courrier Français* in vain defended his cause. But meanwhile the Liberals, who made this violent assault on M. Odillon Barrot, were themselves attacked in rear by a set of journals (the *Moniteur Républicain*, and *l'Homme Libre*) still more violent, which spoke the voice of the "Société des Familles" and the "Société des Saisons," and openly aspired to overturn the Government and establish a republic. The *Constitutionnel* and *Temps* feebly defended MM. Dufaure, Passy, and Teste, and the Liberal part of the Cabinet,—while the *Journal des Débats* and *la Presse* openly supported the new Cabinet, as they had done that of Count Molé, with undiminished vigour and no small share of ability.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 44-47.

41. Trial of Barbès and the conspirators.

The Chamber of Peers was, by an ordonnance of 14th May 1839, charged with the trial of the parties accused of accession to the late revolt, and the proceedings commenced on the 27th June. Armand Barbès, Martin Bernard, Bonnet, and fifteen others, were first brought to trial, and the proceedings soon ran into that violent and impassioned duel between the opposite parties, which all the state trials of France at that period became. Barbès, with generous enthusiasm, took upon himself the whole blame of the proceeding, and strove only to exculpate his companions in arms. "I declare," said he, "that all the citizens, at three o'clock on the 12th May, were ignorant of our project of attacking the Government. They had been assembled by the committee without being informed of the reason of their convocation. They believed they were coming to a review, and it was only on arriving at the ground, whither we had previously sent ammu-

CHAP. XXXIV. 1839.

nition and arms, that I put weapons into their hands, and gave them the signal to march. These citizens then were hurried away, forced by moral influence to follow that order. According to me, they are innocent. For my own part, I desire to take no benefit by this declaration. I declare that I was one of the chiefs of the association—I admit that I gave the order for the combat, and prepared the means of its execution—I admit that I took part in it, and fought against the troops; but while I assume on myself the entire responsibility of the general acts, I deny that I am responsible for acts which I neither counselled nor approved. Among these is the death of Lieut. Drouineau, of which I am specially accused. That is an act of which I am incapable. I did not slay M. Drouineau; had I done so, it should have been in open combat, as in the days of chivalry. I am no assassin—that is all I have to say. When an Indian falls into the hands of his enemy, he does not think of defending himself—he gives up his head to be scalped." "The accused," said M. Pasquier, "had reason on his side when he compared himself to a savage." "The pitiless savage," resumed Barbès, "is not he who gives his head to be scalped, but he who scalps."[1]

[1] L. Blanc, v. 419, 420.

42. Conviction and sentences of the accused.

In these circumstances it was evident that the only question on which there could be any dispute was the accession of the accused to the death of Lieut. Drouineau—as all the rest was admitted, and could not be denied, for they were taken with arms in their hands fighting against the Government. It was very material, however, to obtain a conviction of this offence, because murder was a crime which, unlike treason, it was understood the King could not pardon. After a long trial Barbès was found guilty of insurrection against the State, and "voluntary homicide committed with premeditation." He was in consequence sentenced to death, and the other accused to long periods of confinement, from five to twenty years. The utmost efforts were immediately made by the family

July 12.

of Barbès, which was in the highest degree respectable, to obtain a commutation of his punishment; but there was much difficulty felt on this point, as, however the Sovereign might pardon attempts on his own life, it was very doubtful how far he was entitled to do the same with the murderer of another. The Council of State were divided on the subject, and the majority were inclined to let the law take its course. At length, however, by the intercession of the Duke of Orleans, at whose feet the sister of Barbès had thrown herself, the King was so far strengthened as to feel authorised to give way to those humane feelings which formed so bright a feature in his character. The sentence of death against Barbès was commuted first into forced labour for life, and then into imprisonment for the same term in the prison of Mont St Michel, on the coast of Normandy. Blanqui, another leader of the conspiracy, with eighteen others, were afterwards tried before the same court, and sentenced, the first to death, the rest to long periods of imprisonment. The capital sentence against the first was in like manner commuted, by the clemency of the King, into confinement for life in the state prison of Mont St Michel. There, in the solitary chambers which the austerity of the monks in the dark ages had formed for the voluntary infliction of expiatory discipline, did these gallant but deluded men mourn incessantly over their fallen prospects, amidst a silence broken only by the ceaseles surge of the waves by which they were surrounded on the iron-bound rock on which their prison was built.[1]

Nov. 13, 1839.

[1] Cap. x. 53-55; L. Blanc, v. 425-427; Ann. Hist. xxii. 163, 174; App. to Chron. and xxiii. 178, 206.

43. Views of Barbès and his associates in this conspiracy.

This conspiracy threw a light on the attempt of Louis Napoleon at Strasbourg in the close of the preceding year, and the obstinacy with which the Belgian revolutionists had braved the hostility of combined Europe, rather than relax their hold of a territory containing only three hundred thousand inhabitants in Limbourg and Luxembourg. Both looked for an outbreak at Paris, which, although directed to different objects from either,

CHAP. XXXIV. 1839.

would have operated as a powerful auxiliary to both. Yet were the designs of Barbès, Blanqui, and the conspirators of the 12th May, in reality more at variance with those of the young scion of the Imperial house than even with those of the Government on the throne. Their ideas were an amplification of those of Robespierre and St Just, but without the belief of the latter in the necessity of blood to cement the social edifice. They had embraced the views of Babœuff in the conspiracy in 1797, which so severely tried the Directory; but they were influenced by more humane and philanthropic principles. Their code was founded on a misapplication of that of Christian morality. They applied to the social concerns of men, and the foundations of civil society, the words which our Saviour delivered as a guide for private life, and to combat the innate and universal selfishness of human nature. "The last shall be first, and the first last," they thought was intended to designate, not the next world, but this; and the great object of legislation, in their opinion, in consequence, should be to bring society towards that desirable consummation. They openly inculcated, as a corollary from these principles, the abolition of all gradations of rank, of all capital, and of the invidious distinction of property. All should be equal; and to insure the continuance of that equality, all possessions should be equally divided, and never permitted to accumulate in the hands of one more than in another. The first precept of the Gospel, they observed, was "to sell all your goods and give to the poor." These doctrines are very remarkable, and they heralded another revolution, very different in principle from that of 1789, but perhaps still more formidable in practice. The world was far from the infidel and irreligious spirit which ushered in the first great convulsion: "LIBERTÉ, EGALITÉ, FRATERNITÉ," was still the principle; but men now founded that principle, not on the denial, but on the misinterpretation, of the doctrines of the Gospel.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 49, 50.

While the enthusiastic democrats of Paris were thus laying the foundation of the revolution, which, nine years after, overturned the throne, the partisans of Napoleon were not less active in strengthening their own party, and preparing the way for that still more marvellous change, which enabled him to reap the whole fruits of the coming convulsion. In their anxiety to propitiate the Liberal majority in the Chambers, the Government unconsciously favoured the growth of the feelings which were favourable to the imperial dynasty. A pension of 100,000 francs (£4000) a-year was settled, with the cordial approbation of the Chamber, on the widow of Murat; monuments were everywhere erected or designed to perpetuate the memory of the glories of the Empire. The press cautiously, but assiduously, inculcated the same ideas; and the very remarkable work of Prince Louis, *Les Idées Napoléoniennes*, in a skilful manner favoured them, by representing the incessant wars, which were the chief reproach against his memory, as a temporary and painful effort to secure that general and lasting peace which was the grand object of his desire. "Napoleon," it was said, "was always the friend of peace; he was the protector of commerce and industry: it was for this he waged war with England, the eternal oppressor of both: he was the civiliser of the world; the most pacific and liberal sovereign that ever reigned. It was for the interests of real freedom that he suppressed the Tribunate, its worst enemy, and chased the deputies who had betrayed it through the windows of St Cloud. If he went to Moscow, it was that he might conquer the peace of the world in the Kremlin; if he sacrificed millions of soldiers, it was because that peace could be purchased at no lower price." These ideas were not only sedulously inculcated in *Le Capitole*, a journal specially devoted to the Napoleon interests, but in several other publications, both in France and foreign states. The report was carefully circulated in secret, and therefore the more readily believed, that Prince Napoleon

CHAP. XXXIV. 1839.

was in reality supported by Austria, Russia, and Great Britain; and in a pamphlet published at this time, which made a considerable sensation, it was openly asserted that the existing Government was incapable of providing for the security, prosperity, and glory of France, and that the Napoleon dynasty alone was equal to its requirements. Prince Louis at this time addressed a letter to the editor of the *Times*, in which he solemnly disclaimed any connection with the enterprise of Barbès, and declared that, if his friends engaged in any attempt in his favour, he would be found at its head.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 57, 58; Vie de L. Napoleon, par Lespes, i. 33.

45. Increased strength of the Government.

While future events, however, were in this manner "casting their shadows before," the government of Louis Philippe was in the mean time greatly strengthened by the insurrection in Paris and defeat of Barbès. The question of the secret-service money came on for discussion on May 28th, a fortnight after the suppression of the revolt, and the sum of 1,200,000 francs (£48,000), proposed by Government, was carried by a majority of 262 to 71. It was, however, a reduction of 500,000 francs (£20,000) on the vote of the preceding year. This majority, on what was always the trying question for Ministers, confirmed them in office for the remainder of the session, and they were careful not to shake the advantage they had gained, by bringing forward any measure on which their majority might be less decided. Railway lines, then so much the object of interest, soon succeeded, and absorbed the principal attention of the Chamber, before which no other question of general domestic interest was brought during the remainder of the session.[2]

May 28.

[2] Ann. Hist. xxii. 111-113.

46. Debate on the affairs of the East.

Foreign affairs, however, were now beginning to occupy a large share of public attention, and debates, fraught with the dearest interests of humanity, and prophetic of future changes, took place on that all-important subject. Turkey had at that period been reduced to the last straits, in consequence of the victories of Ibrahim Pasha in Asia

Minor, and the refusal of England and France to render her any aid, when applied to for succour, when the victorious Egyptian legions threatened Constantinople in 1832. The result had been, that Russia gave the required assistance, and extorted, as the price of it, the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, which excluded all ships of war, except the Russian and Turkish, from the Black Sea, and converted its waters into a Muscovite lake.[1] The Western Powers had become sensible, when it was too late, of their extreme folly in thus throwing Turkey into the arms of Russia; and each was endeavouring to repair it, and regain its lost influence in the Levant,—France by supporting Mehemet Ali in his Syrian conquests, England by upholding the decaying Ottoman empire against its southern enemy, so as to avoid all pretence for any further interference on the part of the colossus of the north.

[1] Ante, c. xxxii. § 30.

47. Lamartine's speech on the subject.

The system supported by the French Cabinet was to leave everything *in statu quo* in the Levant, neither disturbing the Russians in their influence at Constantinople, nor Ibrahim in his Syrian conquests. This policy met with a powerful opponent in Lamartine. "I understand," said he, "the system of *statu quo* for the integrity of the Ottoman empire before the treaties with Russia in 1774, 1792, and 1813—before the annihilation of the Turkish navy in 1827 at Navarino, that act of national madness of France and England for the benefit of Russia. But after the conquest of the Crimea by Catherine—after the Russian protectorate of Wallachia and Moldavia—after the emancipation of Greece, and its occupation by your troops, and the millions of subsidies you have still to pay to uphold its independence—after the subjection of the Black Sea to the Russians, and the erection of Sebastopol, where the Muscovite fleets are only twenty-four hours' sail from Constantinople—after the treaties of Adrianople, Unkiar-Skelessi, and Kutaya, and the dismemberment of the half of the empire by Mehemet Ali

CHAP. XXXIV. 1839.

and yourselves, who protect him,—after all this, to speak of the *statu quo*, is, allow me to say, as ridiculous as to speak of the existence of Polish nationality. What! are you about to arm for the *statu quo* of the Turkish empire, which is essential, you say, to the security of Europe, when that *statu quo* is the dismemberment, the annihilation, the agony, of the empire which you pretend to support? Be, then, consistent, and if Turkey is as material to you as you say it is, go to the support, not of the revolt in Syria, but of the imperial government at Constantinople. Lend your counsels, your engineers, your officers, your fleets, to the support of the generous efforts of Sultan Mahmoud to civilise his people; aid him to crush Ibrahim, and to recover Egypt, and all the parts of his empire which are now detaching themselves from it. Instead of this, what are you told to do? Arm for the *statu quo*. That is to say, spend the blood and treasure of France, to maintain what? Turkey in Europe and Constantinople under the power of Russia; Turkey in Asia, under the sabre of Ibrahim and the usurpation of Mehemet.

48. Continued.

"Are the Crimea and the shores of the Black Sea, covered with Russian fleets and military establishments, the Turkish empire? Are Wallachia and Moldavia, chained by the Russian protectorate, and where an Ottoman soldier does not dare to set his foot? Is it to be found in Servia, which has three times defeated the Turkish armies, and is now rapidly growing under the shade of liberty and the protection of its illustrious chief, Prince Milosch, the Washington of the East? Is it to be sought for in the four millions of Bulgarians, the Greeks of Epirus or Macedonia, or in the Peloponnesus or the Isles, torn by yourselves from the Turkish empire? In fine, are you to look for it in Cyprus, with its forty thousand Christian inhabitants, and sixty Turks in garrison; or in Syria, with its infinite diversity of races; or in Egypt,

Candia, Arabia, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, which are all now more or less independent, and some of which you yourselves have wrested from the Ottomans? No! All these splendid territories must be deducted from the Turkish empire—that is to say, you must subtract three-fourths of its extent. What remains? Constantinople—the finest site for a capital, and the finest situation in the world, but on that very account the most coveted,—pressed on one side by the mouth of the Black Sea, where the Russians can debouch any hour they please, and on the other by the entrance into the Archipelago, where the English and French fleets may any day find an entrance. A capital without a territory, and constantly besieged,—that is the true state of the Ottoman empire. And in that capital we have an emperor, heroic, but powerless, contemplating the insolent intrigues of the powers who are disputing beforehand the spoils of his empire. It is the last scene of the Lower Empire, at the time of its overthrow by Mahomet II., a second time on the stage. There is the phantom on which you propose to rest your alliance; there is the pillar which, according to you, is to support the weight of the Russian colossus.

49. Continued.

"What is to be done in these critical circumstances, when the fate of the world, in a manner, hangs in the balance? We must take the initiative in the contest which is about to ensue. It is in vain to expect anything from the Arab domination. It was bold after victories, but it had neither a base nor a future. A hero is not there, as in the West, an expression of a people; he is a meteor, a speciality, which appears for a moment amidst the surrounding darkness, only to render it more impenetrable; a man who does great things with the thousand of slaves who surround him, but does nothing to elevate the level of the people below him; who founds nothing, neither an institution, nor a dynasty, nor a legislation, and of whom it may be said, that in dying he folds

CHAP. XXXIV. 1839.

up all his greatness round himself, as he folds up and lays by his tent. Such, and no more, is Ibrahim Pasha. If to this you add the age of Mehemet Ali, and the health of Ibrahim, broken by war, it becomes evident that the realisation of an Arab dynasty is impossible. Even if it should for a moment succeed, the want of all unity among the people subjected to its power, the internal divisions and revolts always ready to break out, would put insurmountable obstacles in the way of a new empire. Yes! your Arab empire would have all the vices of the Ottoman empire, without its legitimacy; it would not subsist a day beyond the terror which has founded it.

50. Concluded.

"The system of *statu quo* would turn entirely to the advantage of England, mistress of the Mediterranean, of the mouth of the Nile, and of the Red Sea, those great stations on the road to India. It is not for a moment to be thought of. But, without abandoning the English alliance, our policy in the East may be European, by supporting a partition of influence and territory among Russia, France, Austria, and England, who have an interest in and right to it. We should open a congress immediately, and negotiate on these principles; but if time presses, as it probably will, we should positively refuse to attack the fleet of the Sultan, and immediately take possession of some military station in the Levant, such as England possesses in Malta, and Russia in the Black Sea. By so doing we would acquire a commanding voice in the negotiations; in a word, gain what Casimir Périer did by seizing Ancona. The *statu quo* can never be maintained in the East, but, far from being alarmed, we should be rejoiced in the interest of humanity at the progress of civilisation; for rest assured, the first cannon-shot fired on the Euphrates will not be a signal of distress; it will be the signal which will call its different populations to liberty, to life, to organisation, to industry, and open to France a sphere of action worthy of itself."[1]

[1] Moniteur, July 2, 1839; and Ann. Hist. xxii. 187, 189.

It required all the talent and influence of the Ministry

to withstand those eloquent arguments, which acquired additional force from the intimate acquaintance of M. Lamartine with the East, and the halo which his genius had shed over its romantic scenes. M. Villemain, however, made the attempt, and with much ability. "The conclusion," said he, "to which the eloquent speaker who has last addressed you has arrived, does not correspond either with the brilliancy of his exordium or his splendid ideas for the regeneration of the East. To what does it all amount? To this, that we should imitate Casimir Périer, and seek another Ancona in the East, from whence we might have a commanding voice in the approaching partition of the Turkish empire. Such a project cannot for a moment be entertained. It would render necessary the entire remodelling of the territorial divisions of Europe, and would itself be a measure of such obvious and flagrant injustice, as, like the partition of Poland, could not fail to recoil on the heads of all the states concerned in the spoliation. A general war would in all probability arise in the division of the mighty spoil, and even if the ambition and pretensions of rival states were adjusted at the moment, such a measure would leave the seeds of eternal discord and jealousies in all the states that had engaged in it.

51. Argument of M. Villemain on the other side.

"We all see the difficulties, perhaps insurmountable by human wisdom, with which the question of the East is enveloped; and the question really is not whether any particular plan that may be proposed is open to objection, but whether every other is not liable to still greater. Viewed in every light, it will be found that the proposition advanced by the Government is the safest one on the subject; and that proposition amounts to this, 'Great events are about to ensue in the East: an empire may be about to perish; it may survive, it may endure for a long time; let us be prepared for all the chances.' The eloquent speaker, who has such advantages in this debate, from having seen so much, and retained so much in his memory, and possessing such power of bringing it forth at

52. Continued.

CHAP XXXIV. 1839.

the proper moment—is he aware how much of vitality there is, even amidst apparent decay, in every people? Has he been at Varna—has he been at Schumla? Has he seen how long the military genius of Europe, directing the military strength and enduring courage of the Russians, has been arrested before the weak walls of Varna and Schumla, defended by the intrepid Mussulmans? There is still the remains of a great power. The day when it should be attempted to tear up the Turks from the soil which they occupy—the day when you invade the tombs of their fathers and the mosques of their Prophet—may be the day when a great insurrection will burst forth on both sides of the Bosphorus, and possibly you may resuscitate the people in the midst of the ruins in which you would bury them.

53. Concluded.

"It is not proposed to set Europe at defiance: no one wishes to engage in such a desperate project for the nationality of a people. God forbid, however, that in the anticipations which are common to us all, *I do not foresee a period when great changes are to be brought about.* Without interdicting to France the protectorate of Egypt and the East at some future time, it is wiser at present to be regulated chiefly by the experience of the past. The strongest guarantee for the future stability of the Turkish empire does not suppose any intention to restore to it that which time, force, or policy may have torn away; it is only meant to declare that such as it is it shall remain, and that no one has a right to tear fresh fragments from it. Are we to embrace the system of giving to him who has the power to take, and, if force is about to overspread the East, are we to open the gates to it? Infinite are the dangers of such a policy; for the power which advances towards the East may turn in another direction. Constantinople is far from central Europe, but Warsaw touches it." [1]

[1] Moniteur, July 3, 1839; Ann. Hist. xxii. 190, 191.

This very interesting debate reveals both the extreme difficulty of the Eastern Question, and the state of uncer-

tainty in which the French Government was in regard to the policy which should be pursued concerning it. All the other powers of Europe, including England, were inclined to support the Porte against his rebellious vassal, while France conceived that its interests lay in maintaining the ascendancy which the Pasha of Egypt had acquired. These difficulties were increased by the intelligence received of the sailing of the Turkish fleet from Constantinople, and the resumption of hostilities at land by Ibrahim Pasha. Marshal Soult, to be prepared for any event, sent orders to the French fleet in the Levant to steer for the coasts of Syria, and sent M. Caille, his aide-de-camp, to Cairo, to assure Mehemet Ali of the eventual support of France, and to endeavour in the mean time to avert hostilities. He arrived, however, too late: he reached Cairo five days after the battle of Nezib. In the critical circumstances the French Government demanded and obtained from the Chambers a credit of 10,000,000 francs (£400,000), to put the naval armaments on a respectable footing. The necessity of this precautionary measure was so obvious that no serious opposition was or could be made to it, but the debate revealed a very important tendency in the Chamber, which now appeared openly for the first time. This was the desire to intermeddle with the mysteries of diplomacy, and subject the Crown to the direct control of a popular assembly—an innovation fraught with the utmost danger to the ultimate interests of nations. The debate was closed by the following remarks on the part of Government by M. Jouffroy, the reporter of the commission:—

54. Marshal Soult's measures in the East.

"The first consideration on this subject which strikes every one, is the danger of the exclusive occupation of Egypt or Constantinople by any European a people; the second, that these two positions are so closely connected together, that to secure Constantinople you must defend it in Egypt, and to secure Egypt you must defend it in Constantinople. These two systems, though plausible, are

55. M. Jouffroy's exposition of the Government system.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1839.

equally false; the *Ottoman* or *Arab* policy will equally lead to disaster. The only way to avoid it, is to assemble an European congress, the basis of whose deliberations is to be, that no power is to be permitted to aggrandise itself in the East. The initiative of such a policy belongs to France. It is not timid; it is disinterested. Should the Ottoman empire go to pieces, it can only be a transformation. Death does not authorise the seizure by a stranger of the property of the defunct.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 83-85; Ann. Hist. xxii. 195-197.

56. Concluded.

"This great question and great debate impose on the Cabinet an immense responsibility. In receiving the credit of 10,000,000 francs which the Chamber has voted, the Ministry have contracted a solemn engagement, and that is to enable France, in the affairs of the East, to occupy a position worthy of herself, and which may not cause her to decline from the position which she occupies in Europe. That is a difficult task; the Cabinet feels all its extent and weight. It has only been recently formed; it has not had time to commence those acts which consolidate an administration. But fortune has thrown into its hands an affair so great, that if it directs the Government as becomes France, it will be, we venture to say, the most glorious Cabinet which has governed France since 1830." The vote of credit passed by a majority of 287 to 26.[2]

[2] Ann. Hist. xxii. 197, 198.

57. Affairs of Africa after the storm of Constantine.

The difficulties of the Eastern question, sufficiently great in themselves, were much enhanced at this period by an outbreak which occurred in Africa, that could be compared only to the sudden raising of a pillar of sand by the whirlwind of the desert. It almost seemed to justify the assertion of M. Villemain, that if it were attempted to dispossess the Turks from Constantinople, it might produce a storm which would restore the Ottoman power. To understand how this came about, it must be premised that, after the storming of Constantine, the dispossessed bey retired into the interior, and the French dominion was pushed farther into the Atlas, particularly to Stora, the ancient Roman station of Rusicada, which was occupied

by their troops, Djemillah, the old Roman Colonia, and Setif, the ancient Sitifis and capital. Modern Europe could not advance in Africa but by treading on the footsteps and resting in the stations of the ancient conquerors of the world. These conquests enabled the French to extend their dominions in the south of Algeria in a line, which, going round from Constantine towards the sea, and on the other by the frontier of Tunis to the bay of Stura, embraced a territory amply sufficient for the wants of the colony, and easily susceptible of defence.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxii. 256.

50. Their threatening aspect. Oct. 1839.

While the French power was in this manner consolidating in the province of eastern Algeria, the war, in pursuance of the treaty of La Tafna, ceased in the western provinces of Algeria and Oran. It soon appeared, however, that the Arab and the French interpretations of that treaty were very different. The Arab chief, having obtained the provinces allotted to him by it in absolute sovereignty, soon began extending his dominions, laying siege to fortresses, and establishing or dispossessing subordinate emirs, in a way which gave early and serious disquietude to the French Government. Complaints were made on both sides, and on both with much reason: the French complaining of the ceaseless encroachments of the Arabs; the Arabs declaiming on the invasion of the Giaours, and calling on all true believers to rally round the standard of the Prophet. So threatening did affairs become in the province towards the end of 1839, that the Duke of Orleans proceeded to it; disembarked at Algiers on 27th September, and made his entry into Constantine on 11th October. From thence he advanced to Oct. 11. Milah, Djemillah, and Setif, where, amidst the remains of the old Roman citadel, he received the homage of the Oct. 25. newly-subjected tribes. From thence an expedition under the command of the Prince-Royal and General Galbois was directed to the mountainous ridges of the Atlas, farther in the interior, by the awful passes styled the Iron Gates, which were passed by the French army,

CHAP. XXXIV. 1839.

which inscribed on the rocks the words "Armée Française, 1839." The French troops were with great vigour pursuing their conquests, when, on the body of an Arab chief who had been slain, was found a letter from Abd-el-Kader, calling all the faithful to a holy war against the infidels; and intelligence was received of a war on a great scale having commenced in the western provinces, where his authority was chiefly established.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxii. 244-247; Cap. x. 119, 120.

59. Commencement of the insurrection.

The insurrection proved to be of the most formidable description. From the Straits of Gibraltar almost to the confines of Egypt, a secret league appeared to have been formed, and the French establishments were everywhere attacked by hordes of Arabs at the same time, and with inconceivable vigour. Several detachments were surprised by clouds of Bedouins, and after an heroic resistance entirely cut off. So sudden was the irruption, so unforeseen the shock, that the French establishments along the whole extent of the coast were wrapped in flames before it was well known that hostilities had commenced. Everywhere the French were driven back into their fortified posts, and soon reduced to the ground commanded by the guns of their fortresses. Sixty thousand Arabs, with the sword in one hand and the torch in the other, overspread the colony from one end to the other, and Algiers itself beheld their tents in the plain, and their yataghans gleaming in the evening sun.[2]

Oct. 20.

Oct. 21.

[2] Cap. x. 120, 121; Ann. Hist. xxii. 248-250; Moniteur, Oct. 25, 1839.

60. Vigorous defensive measures, and successes of the French.

At the first intelligence of these disasters, the French Government immediately took the most vigorous measures to repair them. Reinforcements to the amount of 12,000 men, 3800 horses, and 1500 mules, with immense stores in ammunition, guns, and material, were forthwith directed with the utmost haste to Toulon, from whence they were hurried over to Africa. By these means the effective force in the field was increased to 40,000 men and 12,000 horses; and the effect of this augmentation speedily appeared. The Arabs retired for the most part before the formidable forces which issued from the

seaports, and in several detached actions they were worsted. In particular, on the last day of the year a body of 4000 French infantry attacked the regular infantry of Abd-el-Kader, strongly posted on the edge of a ravine which covered their front, and after a sharp action drove them from it with the loss of one gun and 300 men slain. This success, though not on a great scale, was very important as restoring the spirit of the troops, and giving the turn to a long train of disasters.[1]

Dec. 31, 1839.

[1] Cap. x. 120, 121; Ann. Hist. xxii. 250-252; Moniteur, Jan. 10, 1840.

61. Death of the Princess Maria of Wurtemberg.

The royal family were plunged into grief in the course of this year by the death of the Princess Maria, daughter of the King. Of a pious disposition, and endowed with every feminine virtue, she resembled those saintly characters which, during the violence and bloodshed of the middle ages, revealed the blessed effect of higher influences. She had been married some time before to the young Prince of Würtemberg; but she bore in her bosom the seeds of a mortal malady, which, after a lingering illness, brought her to the grave at Pisa in Italy, whither she had been conveyed for the benefit of a milder climate. This event, which was most acutely felt by the whole royal family, by whom she was extremely beloved, revealed the melancholy reality of the slender hold which the house of Orleans had of the sympathy or affections of the people. A few words only were addressed to the King by the Chamber of Deputies on the melancholy bereavement, and the funeral cortège traversed all France, from Mont Cenis to the place of sepulture at the Chateau d'Eu in Normandy, without one expression of condolence or sorrow either on the part of the legislature or the people.[2]

[2] Cap. x. 19, 20.

62. Creation of twenty peers. Nov. 7.

If this mournful event was of sinister augury as to the loyalty of the French people to the throne, another was equally significant as to the irrecoverable wound which had been inflicted on the peerage, first, by the precedents of creating peers in batches to get over particular difficulties or support a particular administration, and next,

CHAP. XXXIV. 1839.

from the limitation of those honours *for life*. On 7th November appeared an ordonnance elevating to the peerage Generals Cavaignac and Borelli, Count Jules de Rochefoucauld, and several others, nearly all of the second order of merit. It is true, as peerages were now for life only, frequent additions were necessary to keep up their number; but the creation of a number at once, which had now become a usual step with every administration, especially when, as in this instance, they were appointed for political purposes rather than personal merit, tended daily more and more to degrade the Upper Chamber, and utterly destroy its character as an independent branch of the Legislature, a check alike on the encroachments of the Crown and the vehemence of the Commons. It is not a little remarkable that a system so obviously destructive of the most important constitutional bulwarks, and found to be so in France, should on the other side of the Channel have been so earnestly pressed on the Crown, not merely by a great party as a party measure, but by political philosophers at a distance from the sphere of action, and professing the warmest desire for public liberty.[1] *

[1] Moniteur, Nov. 7, 1839; Cap. x. 67, 68.

63. Commencement of agitation for a lowering of the suffrage.

Seeing the Upper House irrevocably degraded by the system which they themselves had introduced, the Liberal chiefs began to agitate for a great extension of the powers and sphere of action of the Lower. Their efforts were directed chiefly to two objects: 1st. To obtain a great reduction of the electoral franchise, so as to let in a lower class of voters. The different sections of the Liberals, however, were much at variance as to where the line should be drawn: some, among whom were MM. Lafitte, Garnier Pagès, and Dupont de l'Eure, contending that it should be fixed at fifty francs (£2) of direct taxes; and others, numbering Odillon Barrot and the majority of the Liberals, inclining for a higher standard at a hundred francs. The Legitimists, represented by the *Gazette de*

* See ante, c. xxxiv. § 3, note.

France, contended that every person who had served in the National Guard, or paid any sum, however small, of direct taxes, should have a vote, resting on the belief that democracy is the passion of the *bourgeoisie,* and that *universal* suffrage would ere long restore the old influences. In this diversity of opinion no common measure could be agreed on, and a change was not immediately to be apprehended. But the seed was sown; men began to think and speak on the subject, and the foundation of a revolution was laid, destined, at no great distance of time, to overturn the throne, and restore, *by means of universal suffrage,* the Napoleon dynasty.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 69, 70; L. Blanc, v. 439-444.

64. View of the Liberals as to the government of the executive.

2d. The second great object of the Liberal party was to obtain for its chiefs a direct control over the measures of Government, especially in diplomatic affairs. By this was meant not merely that they should have the appointment of a ministry, which is the inherent principle of constitutional government, but that they should have a direct control over the measures of the executive, and in the administration of affairs. In a word, they desired to erect the majority of the Chamber into a large cabinet, which was of its own authority, and at its own pleasure, to govern the country. This was the great object of the Liberal chiefs, and it was to effect it that so many combinations were made, and so many administrations of ephemeral endurance formed. M. Thiers in an especial manner was inflamed with the desire to acquire a direct control over the executive in the critical times evidently approaching, when the Eastern question was every day acquiring more colossal proportions, and France seemed to be destined to take an important if not decisive part in the conferences upon which the fate of the world was to depend. Around him, as the great diplomatic chief who was to carry the principles of the Left Centre into the affairs of nations, and open to themselves the advantages of office and power, the various shades of the Liberals out of office were grouped.[2]

[2] Cap. x. 69, 70, 125; L. Blanc, v. 484.

CHAP. XXXIV.

1839.

65. Commencement of the session of 1840: the King's speech.

The session of 1839 closed without any further event or discussion of general interest, and that of 1840 commenced with the following speech from the throne: "My relations with foreign nations have maintained that pacific character which the general interest requires. Our flag, in concert with that of Great Britain, and faithful to the spirit of that union, always so advantageous to the interests of the two nations, watches over the security and independence of the Ottoman empire. Our fixed policy is to uphold the integrity of that empire, the preservation of which is essential to the maintenance of general peace. Our efforts have at least succeeded in arresting in the East the course of hostilities which we would willingly have prevented; and how great soever may be the diversity of interests, I entertain a sanguine hope that the accord of the great powers will bring about a pacific solution of the question. A great change has been effected in the situation of Spain, and if I cannot yet announce that civil war has entirely ceased, yet the northern provinces are pacified, and the contest has lost the serious character which threatened the throne of Isabella II. In Africa other hostilities have broken out, which call for a decisive repression. Our brave soldiers and cultivators, to whom my son has gone as a pledge of my solicitude, have been perfidiously attacked. The progress of our establishments in Algeria and the province of Constantine is the real cause of that insensate aggression; it is indispensable that it should be punished, and a renewal of it rendered impossible, in order that nothing may hereafter interrupt the progress of settlements which *the French arms are never to quit*, and that our allies may find under our flag the most efficacious protection."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Dec. 24, 1839; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 4, 5.

In the debate on the Address, M. Thiers made a brilliant speech, remarkable as the manifesto of the powerful parliamentary coalition of which he was the head. "I am," he said, "I admit it, a partisan of the English alliance, but that as a man who never forgets

what is due to his country. I cannot renounce that noble alliance, which is founded not only on the union of material strength, but still more on that of moral principles. When alongside of England, we are not obliged to conceal our standards; they bear as a *device*, 'Regulated freedom and the liberty of the world.' And on what do the opponents of the English alliance rest? What has been the cause of the profound hatred, the envenomed strife, which has separated France and England? I will tell you in one word. Democracy has exploded in France at one time with a bloody committee at its head, at another led by a great man, Napoleon. It has astonished the world, but at the same time alarmed it; and, as happens always when liberty alarms, an immense power was given to its enemies. Who has sustained the contest which the French democracy had provoked? Naturally that of all aristocracies which was the most powerful, the most rich, the most skilful. Aristocracy also found a great man, Pitt: the English aristocracy, on behalf of the terrified world, struggled, with a great man at its head, against French democracy with its great man. The strife was dreadful. Napoleon often said, 'I committed one error in my life, an error common to England and me. We might have been allies, and done much for the good of the world. I would have done so if Fox had been at the head of its affairs.' What did that mean, if not that it was the English aristocracy which sustained the contest with Napoleon?

66. Speech of M. Thiers on the Eastern question.

"But behind that question of principle there was an immense material interest. France had not then abandoned the hope of being a maritime and colonial power of the first order. She had not renounced the brilliant dream of distant possessions. She had desired to get Louisiana, to keep possession of St Domingo, and even to attempt to effect a settlement in Egypt, of which the avowed object was to threaten the English possessions in India. To what object at that time did we make all our

67. Continued.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

power bend? To coalesce all the nations of Europe against England. There were then good reasons for a desperate strife at that period. But happily nothing of that kind now exists. Moderated revolution governs France; moderated revolution governs England. The strife of interests has become as impossible as that of principles. France has become enlightened as to the true path of her greatness. Who among us now thinks of distant possessions? Whence this change? Because the mind of France has altered—because all the world sees that our true grandeur is to be found on the Continent.

68. Continued.

"Every one in Europe professes a desire for peace, and happily in a firm and decided way. That is the reason that Russia cannot come to an understanding with us. If the system of partition is impossible, what remains but that of precaution? But the system of precaution—that system which consists in taking a position which might enable us at once to adopt such a line as is consistent with the dignity and interests of France—can be carried into execution only in concert with one nation, and that is England. She is our natural ally in principles, always of importance in Europe, and not less so is she an ally *necessary* for the policy of observation and precaution. The power most interested in preventing Constantinople being occupied by any European state—the power which has always made the greatest efforts to prevent it—is England. It is no wonder it is so. The danger is at sea. England is a great maritime power, and France is one also. Russia menaces Constantinople from Sebastopol; to meet that danger it is necessary to take a defensive position in the Dardanelles, which communicate with France and England. How is that defensive position to be secured? By an Anglo-French fleet in the Dardanelles, for there we shall find an alliance alike in the object and the means. Russia has no need to hasten the period when she is to touch the shores of the Mediterranean. She already occupies the most beautiful shores

of the Black Sea, and although the keys of that sea are to be found in Constantinople, yet they are there held by weak and feeble hands, entirely under her control. Russia, therefore, has no need to accelerate matters; her only interest is to prevent those keys falling into younger and more vigorous hands. Where are those younger and more vigorous hands to be found? Clearly in the Pasha of Egypt, and in him alone.

69. Concluded.

"The Pasha, however, does not desire the perilous honour of guarding those Straits. He knows that if he attempted it, Russia would be there before him: 1833 has taught him that lesson. He knows that to provoke it would be to hasten the partition of the Turkish empire and his own ruin. There is no need, therefore, of trepidation or haste in the Eastern question—there is time to conduct it with prudence, deliberation, and skill. The course to be pursued is quite simple—it consists in placing a combined French and English fleet at the mouth of the Dardanelles, and having done so, *not to substitute* PREMATURELY *for the question at issue between the Sultan and the Pasha, the question of Europe.* The Pasha demands an hereditary right to Egypt and Syria; that is a mere word. Turkey is not in a condition to reconquer them; she should not therefore wish to do so. It is necessary that Turkey, as she did with Greece, should make the sacrifice of Egypt and Syria. The victory of Nezib—the defection of the fleet—has decided the question. The death of Sultan Mahmoud has removed the most implacable enemy of the Pasha. Nothing is wanting for the entire pacification of the East but the cession, in hereditary right, of those provinces which are already his *de facto*, and by the right of conquest."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Dec. 28, 1839; Ann. Hist. xxii. 65-67; L. Blanc, v. 485, 486.

It is one of the most interesting things in history to observe how great coming changes are anticipated in the thoughts of far-seeing men—how much more rapidly do events succeed each other in the realms of ideas than on the theatre of real life. One would have imagined from

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

these words of M. Thiers that the great alliance between England and France, which afterwards worked such wonders in the East, was on the point of being formed, and yet thirteen years elapsed before it took place; and in the interim, England and France were three times on the verge of a serious war! M. Thiers the minister proved very different from M. Thiers the leader of the Opposition. In the mean time, however, all went on smoothly: the Address, which re-echoed the speech, was carried by a majority of 212 to 43; and the King made a gracious answer, which concluded with these words: "The concurrence of the three powers for the prosperity, the strength, and the dignity of France has always been the object of my most anxious solicitude. It is thus that can alone be displayed, *without and within*, the salutary action of the constitutional monarchy which we have all sworn to maintain. Your loyal and patriotic adhesion is a new pledge to me of the support which my Government will find in you for the true interests of the country, which are *inseparable from the rights and the ascendant of authority*."[1]

70. Reflections on this debate.

[1] Ann. Hist. xxiii. 112; Moniteur, 24th Dec. 1839.

71. Marriage of the Duke de Nemours and the Princess of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.

These flattering appearances, however, were entirely fallacious. The Chamber was not inclined to support the Ministry; they were only waiting for a favourable opportunity to overturn it. A coalition, of which M. Thiers was the head, had been formed between the Left and the Left Centre, which calculated upon possessing a small majority in the Deputies; but they were for some time at fault, from a difference of opinion as to the question on which the trial of strength should take place. At length it was agreed to make it on the settlement to be made on the Duke de Nemours, between whom a marriage had been arranged and the Princess Victoire Auguste Antoinette de Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, sister of the King of Portugal, niece of the King of the Belgians, and cousin of Prince Albert, the husband of Queen Victoria. The high connections of the bride, who was in her nine-

teenth year, and very pleasing, rendered the marriage a great object to Louis Philippe, and he proposed, as a suitable settlement for the young couple, a grant of 500,000 francs (£20,000) a-year. This income, which was not more than many English noblemen enjoy, was vehemently objected to by all shades of Liberals, and it was resolved to make the debate on it their *cheval de bataille* against the Government. Africa was at stake from the insurrection of Abd-el-Kader; the fate of the East hung in the balance on the solution of the Eastern question; but it was not on either that a coalition of the Liberals of France could be formed. *That* could be effected in a bourgeois-elected legislature only by a pitiful combination against the marriage-settlement of the second son of their sovereign.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 150-152; Ann. Hist. xxxiii. 158, 159.

72. Dotation of the Duke de Nemours thrown out by the Chamber.

It must be admitted, however, that there was a great deal to say against the proposed settlement; and if it was unworthy of the legislature of a great nation to hold out on such an occasion against the request of the King, it was not less ill-judged on his part to make that request. By a law passed on 4th March 1832, it had been declared that *in case of the insufficiency* of the private domain of the King, the provisions for his sons should fall on the State. This necessarily gave the Chamber a title to inquire whether the private domain of the Sovereign was really inadequate for the proposed settlement, so as to entitle him to come on the State for the deficiency. The commission to whom the matter was referred reported in favour of the settlement, with the provision only that the jointure of the princess should be restricted to 200,000 francs (£8000) a-year. This report was rested mainly on the fact that, by the senatus-consultum of 1810, appanages were created for the younger sons of the Emperor Napoleon, and each was left a revenue of 3,000,000 francs (£120,000) a-year, and that a pension of 100,000 francs (£4000) had already been settled on Madame Murat. This, it was alleged, was an indication of the

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

state necessity of providing in a liberal manner for the younger sons of the reigning sovereign. On the other hand, it was strongly urged, especially in a pamphlet by M. de Cormenin, which had an immense circulation, entitled *Questions Scandaleuses d'un Jacobin*, that the King had a large private fortune, which produced at least 3,000,000 francs (£120,000) a-year; and that no earthly reason could be assigned why the burdens of the people, already so great, should be increased to enable the King to augment the riches of his family. The question came on on the 20th February, and the vote was taken in deep silence and amidst breathless expectation on both sides. The result was decisive: only 200 supported the proposal of the Cabinet, while 226 voted against it. A majority of 26 appeared against Marshal Soult's Ministry. The triumph of the coalition was complete—no ministry since 1830 had experienced such a defeat.[1]

Feb. 23.

[1] Moniteur, Feb. 24, 1840; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 161, 162; Cap. x. 155, 156.

73. M. Thiers' second Ministry.

This vote necessarily induced a change of ministry, and there could be no doubt on what basis it required to be formed. A considerable majority of the Chamber, composed of the Left and Left Centre, had declared against the Government, and therefore its successors required to be taken from the chiefs of that coalition. The King, in the first instance, consulted Count Molé—the usual practice in a change of ministry being to take the opinion of the Premier who immediately preceded the one who had been displaced—and he recommended that the Duke de Broglie should be sent for. The Duke, however, was inspired with a reverence almost amounting to idolatry for M. Thiers, and in consequence he not only declined the office of premier himself, but earnestly pressed him as the successor of Marshal Soult. The King was not averse to M. Thiers individually, though he feared the party to which he belonged; but even if he had been hostile to him, he had no alternative, for the brilliant orator was the chosen of the majority of the Chamber.[2]

[2] Moniteur, Feb. 28, 1840; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 163-166; Cap. x. 159-162

The King accordingly sent for M. Thiers, and professed the utmost confidence in him: the adroit minister pledged himself to combine the former system of government with his own principles, without any considerable change; and a list of ministers was forthwith submitted to the sovereign, approved of, and appeared next morning in the *Moniteur*.*

74. First division supports the Ministry. Mar. 24.

The new Cabinet contained some of the Doctrinaires, in particular M. Joubert, but none of their chiefs. Rivals in politics and literature, M. Thiers and M. Guizot were too brilliant stars to shine in the same hemisphere. By this division of the Doctrinaires, however, a considerable accession of strength was gained for the new Ministry; and M. Guizot, though not included in the Cabinet, was appeased by the important situation of ambassador at the court of London. The skill with which the Ministry had been formed from the chiefs of the different parties into which the Chamber was divided, appeared in the first debate which took place after it had entered upon office, which was on a supplementary grant of 1,000,000 francs (£40,000) for the secret expenses of 1840. This subject elicited from M. Thiers a statement of the principle on which the Ministry was founded, and the necessities which had led to its construction. "The largest party in the Chamber," said he, "is that which supported the Ministry of the 15th April; but there are also several intermediate divisions, which are classed under the name of the Centre Gauche, and have lately gained much strength by what is called the Coalition, which has now formed the ancient majority; in fine, there is the old Opposition. The new Cabinet has sprung from these intermediate parties. Were any of these parties so compact, so determined, that it would not support any cabinet but such as came exclusively from itself, the Government, difficult

* The new Cabinet stood thus:—President of the Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Thiers; Minister of the Interior, M. Rémusat; Justice and Public Worship, M. Vivien; Finances, M. Pelet de la Lozère; Public Instruction, M. Cousin; War, General Cubières; Marine and Colonies, Admiral Roussin; Public Works, M. Joubert; Commerce, M. Gouin.—*Moniteur*, 28th February 1840.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

under any circumstances, with the present Chamber would become impossible. What is to be done in such circumstances? Evidently to come to a compromise. Such an arrangement is allowed by all to be indispensable. Is it honourable? Yes; for during the last three years we have disputed more about words than things, and there is no such diversity of opinion between the middle parties as to render acting together discreditable." The justice of these remarks was universally felt; and the result was, that the ministerial proposition was carried by a majority of 246 to 160 in the Chamber of Deputies, and of 143 to 53 in the Peers. This majority was so considerable as to establish firmly the Administration of M. Thiers in power.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Mar. 26 and April 16, 1840; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 163, 191.

75. Early measures of the Ministry.

Although, however, the victory of Ministers appeared to be so complete in the legislature, yet it was far from being equally so in the country. On the contrary, the inherent weakness of a coalition administration appeared from the very first. The only real concession made to the Liberal party, which, in the person of their chief, had now ascended to power, was an ordonnance which appeared on occasion of the marriage of the Duke de Nemours, which was celebrated at St Cloud on the 27th April. This ordonnance extended the amnesty declared by the ordonnance of 8th May 1837 to persons condemned *par contumace*—that is, in absence—as well as those actually convicted on trial. This was a very important concession to the Liberals, for the number of persons who stood banished by these sentences in absence was very considerable. But it was their last triumph; and such as it was, it was gained for persons, not things. When their general measures came to be brought forward, they were found to be scarcely distinguishable from those of the former administration. The question of Parliamentary reform and an extension of the suffrage was adjourned indefinitely, upon the plea that the present was not a convenient time to bring it forward. A proposal of the Liberals, that all

April 27, 1840.

persons holding office under Government should be excluded from the Chamber, was, to use the expression of the day, "interred in the bureaus;" the conversion of the *rentes* adjourned, though M. Gouin, the great promoter of that measure, was Minister of Commerce; in fine, M. Odillon Barrot voted with Ministers on the secret-service money, though he had an hundred times denounced it as a scandalous engine of corruption. In short, it was soon evident that the Liberals, having succeeded in displacing their opponents from the helm by an outcry raised for popular measures, and got quit of the sentences pronounced against their exiled adherents, were content to fall back into the former system of government as to general measures, and to bury in oblivion their favourite maxim, "Le Roi règne et ne gouverne pas."[1]

[1] Cap. x. 169, 170; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 194-198.

76. State of the public press.

The same division among the Liberals, and tergiversation of many among their ranks, appeared in the public press, ever so influential in forming opinion, and placing and displacing administrations in France. The *Constitutionnel*, charmed to see its former contributor, M. Thiers, prime-minister, instantly became his supporter, and on every occasion strongly supported his measures. The same course was adopted by the *Courrier Français*, also a Liberal journal, and the *Siècle*, the known organ of M. Odillon Barrot. On the other hand, the *Presse*, which was in the interest of Count Molé, vehemently denounced the Administration, and in particular accused M. Thiers, in no measured terms, of having gained the favour of such of the journals as supported him by the most shameful corruption and unscrupulous use of ministerial patronage. The *Journal des Débats*, though preserving a more measured tone in its opposition, was not the less powerful in declamation, and by its withering sarcasm inspired terror even in the highest depositaries of authority. The extreme Radical and Republican journals assailed the government of M. Thiers, as they did every other which promised vigour, with the utmost violence; while

CHAP. XXXIV.

1840.

the Legitimists, without compromising themselves by openly attacking him, in secret indulged the hope that the distrust, insecurity, and anarchy which would be consequent on a semi-Liberal administration, would dispel the existing illusions, and pave the way for the restoration of the elder branch of the house of Bourbon.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 172, 173.

77. Bill regarding infant labour.

The extension of manufactures, especially that of cotton, in France, led to a very long and interesting discussion on the limitation of the labour of children in various branches of manufactures. Experience had already proved in France, what had so long been known in England, that in this matter the feelings of nature were reversed in the progress of society, and that parents, so far from being the protectors, were too often the worst enemies of their children. The indulgence of habits of intoxication, quarrels in families, profligacy on the part of both parents, or the inevitable misfortunes of life, had induced the practice of sending the little innocents, in order to swell the gains of the family, at so early an age to factories, that their health was ruined, and they became sickly or deformed, to the utter destruction of their prospects in life. Numerous petitions were presented to both Chambers, setting forth the enormity of these evils, and the absolute necessity of legislative interference for the protection of infant labour; but so great was the influence of the capitalists in both branches of the Legislature, that it was with trembling steps that the Government approached the subject. After long and anxious deliberation with the chambers of commerce from all parts of France, a bill was prepared by the Minister of Commerce, and introduced into the Chamber of Peers, where the opposition to it was expected to be less violent than in the Deputies. The measure proposed was of the mildest character, and in fact altogether disproportioned to the enormity of the evil with which it had to contend. It was limited to manufactories set in motion by a *continued* moving power, as water or steam, or making use of continued fires, as

potteries or glassworks, and forbade absolutely the employment in such works of children below eight years; limited the hours of work between eight and twelve to 8 hours a-day, and between twelve and sixteen to 12 hours. It forbade, also absolutely, labour during the entire night to children under twelve, and allowed it only for 8 hours out of the 24 between twelve and sixteen. Even these moderate safeguards were strongly opposed in the Peers, and only carried, after a long debate, by a majority of 91 to 35. It was not deemed prudent to attempt its introduction this session to the Deputies; so that, in the mean time, the evils complained of remained entirely without a remedy. The Chamber of Deputies gave token of their parsimonious disposition, and insensibility to the strongest claims of national gratitude and honour, by limiting the pension awarded, on the recommendation of the ministerial commission, to the widow of Colonel Combes, who had met a glorious death in the breach of Constantine,[1] to 2000 francs (£80) a-year, *including therein* the pension of 755 francs (£34) already enjoyed by her as the widow of a colonel in the army.[2]

[1] Ante, c. xxxii. §

[2] Moniteur, Feb. 23, 1840; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 200, 224.

78. Project for removing the bones of Napoleon to Paris.

Essentially imbued with historical studies and associations, the mind of M. Thiers exhibited a strange mixture of democratic and imperial ideas. The historian of the Revolution, and of the Consulate and the Empire, appeared alternately at every step of his career. He was essentially democratic in his feelings, and his strongest impressions were in favour of the right of resistance, and the governments founded on its successful assertion; but his imagination had been warmly kindled by the study of the glories of Napoleon's reign, and his judgment told him that a strong military government was alone suitable to so fervid a people as the French, when excited by such ideas. His *beau ideal* of society and government would have been a community singing with enthusiasm the "Marseillaise," and prepared at any moment to rise in insurrection itself, or assist revolution in other states, and at the

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

same time coerced by the iron hand of Napoleon, and kept in awe by the charges of his glittering cuirassiers, or the discharges of his redoubtable artillery. It was by this combination of strength in the moving, and weight in the restraining power, that in his opinion the interests of freedom and order could alone be reconciled. In pursuance of these views, one of his first public acts, after his accession to power, was to open a negotiation with Lord Palmerston for the transference of the bones of Napoleon, from their solitary resting-place under the willow-tree in St Helena, to the banks of the Seine, "which he had loved so well." The British Foreign Secretary was too magnanimous not to accede to a request founded in such natural feelings, and too clear-sighted not to be sensible that the granting was a greater national triumph than the refusing it. He was too deeply engaged, also, at the time, in forming a confederacy with Russia and Austria to check France in the Levant, not to avail himself gladly of the opportunity of lessening the animosity among its inhabitants, which, he was aware, would necessarily arise from the success of that attempt. He returned, accordingly, a courteous and eloquent answer to the request of the French Minister, expressing a hope "that all feelings of animosity between the two nations, should they still exist, may be for ever buried in the tomb of Napoleon." The French Government, as well they might, were much gratified by this act of dignified courtesy; and, shortly after, the Bellepoule frigate was despatched from France to bring the remains of the immortal hero to their final resting-place on the banks of the Seine.[1] *

Aug. 9, 1840.

[1] Cap. x. 174, 175; Moniteur, Aug. 12, 1840.

Not less solicitous to keep alive and fan the revolutionary flame than to restore the ashes of the great conqueror

* "My Lord,—Le Gouvernement de sa Majesté ayant pris en considération l'autorisation que lui demande le Gouvernement Français, de transférer les cendres de l'Empereur Napoléon de St Hélène en France, vous pouvez déclarer à M. Thiers que le Gouvernement de sa Majesté se fera un plaisir d'accéder à cette demande. Le Gouvernement de sa Majesté espère que l'empressement qu'il met à répondre à cette demande sera consideré en France comme une preuve du désir de sa Majesté d'effacer jusqu'à la dernière trace de ces animosi-

CHAP. XXXIV.

1840.

79. Inauguration of a pillar to Insurrection on the Place of the Bastile.

to their proper resting-place on the banks of the Seine, M. Thiers, soon after his accession to power, announced a splendid fête, on occasion of the anniversary of the three glorious days, when the bones of the heroes who had perished in the strife for freedom on that occasion, should be removed to one place of sepulture in the Place of the Bastile, and a splendid column, surmounted by the Genius of Liberty, was to be erected over their remains, as an eternal monument of the lawfulness of insurrection. It may readily be conceived what enthusiasm this theatrical project, which was announced in the beginning of April, and the preparations for it immediately commenced, excited among the working classes of Paris, in whom democratic principles were still so prevalent. It was an official recognition of the right of insurrection—a solemn inauguration of a monument to its triumph. The bones of those who had fallen in the civil strife were immediately begun to be collected, and conveyed with great pomp in funeral cars to the interim places of deposit, preparatory to their removal to the final place of sepulture in the Place of the Bastile, where the column was to be erected. These melancholy cars, each drawn by twelve horses, excited the deepest feelings of commiseration and anguish in the people; the number whose bones were thus collected was five hundred and four. On the 28th July the translation of the whole to the general place of sepulture in the catacombs, beneath the proposed column in the Place of the Bastile, took place with extraordinary pomp, in the midst of a splendid military cortège, and an immense crowd of spectators. The King, accompanied by M. Thiers, witnessed the procession from one of the windows in the Louvre. He was received with loud accla-

July 28.

tés qui, pendant la vie de l'Empereur, avaient poussé les deux nations à la guerre. Le Gouvernement de sa Majesté aime à croire que de pareils sentiments, s'ils existaient encore, seraient ensevelis à jamais dans le tombeau destiné à recevoir les restes mortels de Napoléon. Le Gouvernement de sa Majesté se concertera avec celui de la France pour les mesures nécessaires à l'effet d'opérer la translation. PALMERSTON."—*Moniteur*, August 12, 1840; and CAPEFIGUE, x. 175, note.

CHAP. XXXIV.

1840.

mations; but such was the excitement of the people, and the impulse given to the revolutionary passions by the scene, that the Government were under the most serious apprehensions, and the preparations made on both sides looked rather like the commencement of a new, than the celebration of an old insurrection. The "Marseillaise" and "Parisienne" were sung with enthusiasm; the excited and agitated look of the groups in the streets betokened a coming storm; and already the breaking of lamps and commencement of barricades indicated a serious popular movement. Everything prognosticated a terrible strife; but the preparations of Government were too complete to permit its commencement. The streets were traversed by long trains of artillery and dense columns of infantry; huge bodies of cavalry, with horses saddled, and the bridles over the arms of the cavaliers, stood in all the squares. These preparations, however, averted the dangers which the Ministers had so imprudently invoked; and the fête passed over without any other result but a great impulse to the revolutionary passions in the minds of the people, and an increased dread of their revival in that of the King.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxiii. 238-240, Chron.; Cap. x. 183, 184; Moniteur, July 29, 1840.

80. Expedition of Louis Napoleon to Boulogne. Aug. 6.

These alternate encouragements to the Republican and Imperial passions revived in the breasts of Louis Napoleon and his partisans the hope that the time had now come when their projects might, with almost a certainty of success, be carried into execution. A few days, accordingly, after the termination of the fêtes in Paris, the young Prince embarked in London on board the steamer Edinburgh, accompanied by forty of his comrades and attendants. He had prepared a proclamation, in which, alluding to the removal of the bones of Napoleon to France, he declared that it was regenerated France alone that was worthy to receive them. "Frenchmen," said he, "the ashes of the Emperor should not come but into regenerated France. The manes of a great man should

not be insulted by impure and hypocritical homage. Glory and liberty should stand erect beside the coffin of Napoleon. The traitors must disappear from the country. Banished from my country, I should not have complained had I been the only unfortunate; but the glory and honour of the country were exiled with me. Frenchmen! we will re-enter it together. To-day, as three years ago, I come to devote myself to the popular cause. If chance caused me to fail at Strasbourg, an Alsatian jury proved that I had not miscalculated the feelings of the country. When one enjoys the honour of being at the head of such a people as the French, *there is a certain way to do great things, and that is to will them.* At present there is nothing to be found in France but violence on one side and license on the other. I wish, in surrounding myself with the most eminent in the country without exception, and in supporting the interests and wishes of the masses, to form an imperishable edifice. I wish to give to France true alliances, a solid peace, and not to cast it into the perils of a general war. Frenchmen! I see before me a brilliant future for the country. I feel behind me the shade of the Emperor, which impels me forward. I will not stop till I have regained the sword of Austerlitz, and replaced the nations under our standards, the people in its rights. Vive la France!" [1]

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

[1] Cap. x. 177, 178.

81. Failure of the enterprise. Aug. 6.

Solitary in thought, taciturn in habit, Louis Napoleon had communicated with no one when he planned this audacious enterprise; he took council of himself and his own intrepidity, and trusted in his star alone. He was accompanied by General Montholon, Colonels Parquin and Vaudrey, and thirty-six other inferior officers. During the voyage the young Prince, like his uncle in the voyage from Elba, frequently harangued his followers; he wore a greatcoat and boots similar to the Emperor's, and held his sword in his hand. At one in the morning of the 6th August, the steamboat approached the little harbour of

Aug. 6.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

Vimeroux, and the whole party, numbering in all sixty persons, soon after disembarked on the sands. A proclamation was immediately placarded, which bore: "The dynasty of the Bourbons of Orleans has ceased to reign; the French people have regained their rights; the troops are absolved from their oaths of fidelity; the Chamber of Peers and Deputies is dissolved. A national congress shall be assembled on the arrival of Prince Napoleon at Paris: *M. Thiers, President of the Council, is named President of the Provisional Government.* Marshal Clausel is appointed commander-in-chief of the troops at Paris; General Pajol retains the command of the first military division; all the chiefs of corps who shall not immediately yield obedience to these commands shall be dismissed. All the officers and sub-officers who shall energetically demonstrate their sympathy with the national cause, shall receive dazzling rewards. Vive la France!" In addition to this proclamation, the party were provided *with an eagle* which had been trained to fly to the top of a column; and when let go at the foot of the pillar on the heights of Boulogne, flew to the top, and spread its wings there.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 179, 180; Procès de Napoleon; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 271.

82. Failure of the enterprise.

The omen, however, proved fallacious, or rather it was *premature;* the imperial eagle was curbed in its flight on this occasion. Having effected their disembarkation without opposition, the conspirators dispersed without difficulty a company of douaniers who appeared to obstruct their passage, and having entered Boulogne, they made straight for the barracks of the 42d regiment, from whom they expected support. Everything depended on their fidelity; had they joined the Imperialists, the whole garrison would have followed the example, and it was all over with the government of Louis Philippe. Already the guard at the gate manifested symptoms of vacillation at the announcement of Louis Napoleon, and a few seconds more would have led to a revolt, when Captain Puyzellier, having come up in haste to the spot, had influence enough with his men to retain them in their allegiance. In the

scuffle Prince Louis drew his pistol and shot a grenadier. Finding, however, that the military were not to be shaken in their allegiance, the band retired, still in good order, from the barracks, and marched towards the upper part of the town in hopes of rousing the citizens to join them. They found the gates, however, closed against them, and being unable to force them open with strokes of the hatchet, they were obliged to retire, and took post around the column, on the summit of which they displayed the tricolor flag. Driven from thence, they made for their boats on the beach. They were pursued, however, and made prisoners without further bloodshed; and so terminated the second attempt of Prince Louis to regain the Imperial throne.[1]

[1] Procès de L. Napoleon; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 270-274, Chron.

83. His trial, and sentence of imprisonment. Oct. 6.

Taught by experience, the French Government did not again repeat the folly of a trial of the conspirators by jury, or simply banishing Prince Louis from France, leaving him to prosecute his designs elsewhere. He was brought before the House of Peers with his followers, in October, and after a short trial, sentenced to imprisonment for life in a fortress within the kingdom, while his associates were condemned, some to transportation, others to imprisonment for very long periods. As they were all convicted on the clearest evidence of an attempt to overturn the Government by open force, and this was the second occasion on which Prince Louis had made the attempt, these sentences must be regarded as extremely moderate, and such as reflected no small lustre on the humane administration of Louis Philippe. Prince Louis was soon after conducted to Ham, where he was confined in the same apartments which had formerly been occupied by Prince Polignac. He abated nothing of his intrepid bearing before the Chamber of Peers, and had the magnanimity to take upon himself the whole responsibility of the enterprise. "I had no accomplices," said he; "alone I conceived the enterprise: no one was acquainted either with my designs, my hopes, or my resources. If I am to blame towards any, it is to my own friends; yet I trust they will not accuse me of having

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

lightly compromised courage and devotion such as theirs. They will understand the motives which have not permitted me to reveal even to them *the extent of the reasons I had to hope for success.* I represent before you, gentlemen, a principle, a cause, a defeat. The principle is that of the sovereignty of the people, the cause is that of the Empire, the defeat is Waterloo! You have recognised the principle; you have served the cause; the defeat you would avenge! No! there is no disaccord betwixt you and me; and I will not believe that I am doomed to bear the penalty of the defections of others." [1]

[1] Procès de L. Napoleon; Ann. Hist. xxii. 289; Vie de l'Napoleon, i. 39, 41.

84. His life in prison, and its beneficial results.

The next six years of his life were spent by Prince Louis in strict seclusion, conversing only in books with the illustrious of former ages. Such converse is more strengthening to the mind than intercourse with the living, who are generally pigmies compared to the giants of past time; and many a man who has ultimately risen to greatness, has traced it to the fortunate calamities which for a season chained him to thought and study and reflection. Prince Louis was no exception to this rule; and much of the splendour of his future career may be traced to an event which, for the present, seemed to have altogether blasted his hopes. Nor was he without encouragement even at the moment from the most eminent men of his time. Béranger wrote to him in prison, "May you one day, Prince, be in a situation to consecrate to our common country the fruit of the experience you have acquired, and will yet obtain." And Chateaubriand, ever the first to show respect to courage in misfortune, wrote to him on 16th June 1844: "Prince, in the midst of your misfortunes, you have studied with as much sagacity as force the causes of a Revolution which, in modern Europe, has opened the career of royal calamities. Your love of liberty, your courage and your sufferings, would give you every claim to my support, if, to be worthy of your esteem, I did not feel that I ought to remain faithful to the misfortunes of Henry V. as I am to the glory of Napoleon." [2]

[2] Chateaubriand au Prince Louis, June 16, 1840; Vie de L. Napoleon, i. 40, 41.

85. Attempt of Darmès to assassinate the King. Oct. 17.

Another of the murderous attempts which had so often disgraced France of late years occurred in this autumn, and revealed the intensity of the fanatical passions which burned under the apparently smooth surface of society. On the 17th October, as the King was coming from St Cloud to assist at a council of his Ministers, at the angle of the Place Louis XV., just when he had lowered the sash of the window of his carriage to salute the guard, the discharge of a pistol close at hand was suddenly heard, and the carriage was filled with smoke. No one was injured by the discharge, and on looking out of the window the King saw a man crouching behind one of the lions which decorate that superb Place. He was immediately arrested, with the smoking carbine still in his hand, and conducted to the nearest police-office. His first words were, "Cursed carbine! I took a good aim, but it was too strongly charged." Being interrogated by the prefect, the following strange answers were made by him to the interrogatories: "What is your name?—Marius Edouard Darmès. What is your age?—Forty-three. Where were you born?—At Marseilles. What is your profession?—A conspirator. That is not a profession.—Well, put down I live by my labour. What induced you to commit so odious a crime,—have you any accomplices?—I have no accomplices: my motive was to slay the greatest tyrant of ancient or modern times. Do you not repent of having conceived and executed so abominable a crime?—I repent only of not having succeeded in it. Have you long entertained the design of murdering the King?—Only an hour before I put it in execution." It is easy to see here the influence of the secret societies and revolutionary publications which had come to exercise so fatal an influence on the minds of the working classes, in which the killing of a king was represented as the highest of the civic virtues.[1] Notwithstanding his being caught in the fact, and the King having narrowly escaped with his life, the humanity of the sovereign

[1] Ann. Hist. xxiii. 293, 294; Moniteur, Oct. 17, 1840; Cap. x. 186, 187.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

prevailed over the representations of his Council, and Darmès, after being convicted before the Chamber of Peers, was sentenced only to imprisonment for life.

86. Disinterment of the bones of Napoleon. Oct. 15.

The frigate Bellepoule, despatched to receive the remains of Napoleon, made a good passage, and arrived in safety at St Helena. The officers intrusted with the melancholy duty were received with the utmost respect by the English garrison, and every preparation was made to give due solemnity to the disinterment of the Emperor's remains. The solitary tomb under the willow-tree was opened, the winding-sheet rolled back with pious care, and the features of the immortal hero exposed to the view of the entranced spectators. So perfectly had the body been embalmed that the features were undecayed, the countenance serene, even a smile on the lips, and his dress the same, since immortalised in statuary, as when he stood on the fields of Austerlitz or Jena. Borne first on a magnificent hearse, and then down to the harbour on the shoulders of British grenadiers, amidst the discharge of artillery from the vessels, batteries, and all parts of the island, the body was lowered into the French frigate, and England nobly, and in a right spirit, parted with the proudest trophy of her national glory. The Bellepoule had a favourable voyage home, and reached Havre in safety in the beginning of December. The interment was fixed for the 15th of the same month—not at St Denis, amidst her ancient sovereigns, but in the Church of the Invalides, beside the graves of Turenne, Vauban, Lannes, and the paladins of France; and every preparation was made for giving the utmost magnificence to the absorbing spectacle.[1]

[1] Précis des Evènemens, Ann. Hist. xxiii. 305-308; Cap. x. 292, 293.

Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm and excitement which prevailed in Paris when the day fixed for the august ceremony arrived. The weather was favourable; the sun shone forth in unclouded brilliancy, but a piercing wind from the north blew with such severity that several persons perished of cold as they were

waiting for the funeral procession. Early on the morning of the 15th, the coffin, which had been brought by the Seine to Courbevoie the preceding evening, was placed on a gigantic funeral-car, and at ten it began its march, attended by an immense and splendid military escort, and amidst a crowd of six hundred thousand spectators. So dense was the throng that it was half-past one when the procession reached the Place de la Concorde, from whence it passed by the bridge of the same name to the Church of the Invalides, where it was received by the King, the whole royal family, with the Archbishop and all the clergy of Paris. "Sire!" said the Prince de Joinville, who approached at the head of the coffin, "I present to you the body of the Emperor Napoleon." "General Bertrand," said the King, "I command you to place the sword of the Emperor on his coffin." When this was done, he said, "General Gourgaud, place the hat of the Emperor on his coffin." This also was done, and the King having withdrawn, the coffin was placed on a magnificent altar in the centre of the church, the funeral service was performed with the utmost solemnity, and the *Dies Iræ* chanted with inexpressible effect by a thousand voices. Finally, the coffin, amidst entrancing melody, was lowered into the grave, when every eye in the vast assemblage was wet with tears, and the bones of Napoleon "finally reposed on the banks of the Seine, amidst the people whom he had loved so well."[1]

87. Reinterment of Napoleon in the Church of the Invalides. Dec. 15.

[1] Ann. Hist. xxiii. 311, 313, Chron.; Cap. x. 291, 292.

Such was the excitement produced by this heart-stirring spectacle that it seriously shook the Government, and revealed the depth of the abyss, on the edge of which they stood when Prince Louis made his descent at Boulogne. Not only in the countless multitudes which issued from the faubourgs, but in some battalions of the National Guard, were heard the cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" No one exclaimed "Vive le Roi." One only thought, the recollections of the Empire, absorbed every mind. With these cries were mingled others of more

88. Political manifestations on the occasion.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

sinister moment for the present times, as "A bas les Ministres de l'étranger!" "Vive M. Thiers!" "Mort à l'Europe!" The "Marseillaise" and the "Parisienne" were vociferously sung in every street, the whole multitude joining in the chorus. These demonstrations of public feeling were eagerly adopted and commented on next day in the Opposition journals, and from them acquired an importance in the eyes of other nations, to which they were scarcely of themselves entitled. "The opinion of France," said they, "has caused itself to be heard throughout all the legions: the Ministry stands reproved; nothing remains for it but to give in its resignation." Such, in the words of its ablest supporters, was democratic government, represented as the perfection of human reason, the only secure foundation for general regeneration!—a government dependent entirely on popular favour, expressed by a vociferous mob of ignorant and impassioned men chanting popular airs in the streets, with bayonets in their hands![1]

[1] National and Siècle, Dec. 16, 1840; Cap. x. 294, 295.

89. Threatening state of affairs in the East.

But the French Government at this period was engaged in a more arduous undertaking than even its maintenance against the fickle caprices of the Parisian multitude. It was threatened with an European war; preparations were making for defending the national independence, even in its last stronghold, the streets of the capital. The progress of events in the East, coupled with the disposition, at once warlike and democratic, of M. Thiers, had brought on a crisis in the Levant, from which it seemed impossible to find an exit except by drawing the sword. M. Thiers, equally enamoured of the Imperial as the Revolutionary spirit, saw in the distracted state of Turkey after the battle of Nezib, already recounted,[2] a fair opportunity for regaining the French influence in the Levant, and realising, by pacific means, the dream of Napoleon for the permanent establishment of French power in Egypt. By supporting Mehemet Ali, its rebellious pasha, against the Sultan, he hoped to bind him irrevocably to the interests of France, and thus

[2] Ante, c. xxxii. §§ 56, 64.

achieve by the pen what the Emperor had failed in effecting by the sword. Great would be the éclat which such an achievement would give to French diplomacy; and it was the more attractive to the French minister that it promised to avenge the cause of Napoleon on the very theatre of his former defeat, and to interrupt the communication of the English with India by that very route which steam navigation has again rendered the chief line of transit to the shores of the Ganges.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 196, 197.

90. M. Guizot's account of the British policy in the East. April 15.

The views of the British Government, which were shared with those of Austria, Russia, and Prussia on this subject, were justly stated by M. Guizot, the French ambassador in London, to M. Thiers, on the 15th April 1840. "The British Government," said this sagacious statesman, "conceives it has in the East two interests, unequal, without doubt, but which have both got possession of it. The one is terror of the Russians at Constantinople; the other, of the French at Alexandria. It would willingly prevent at Constantinople, by the force of the Government, or by the regular intervention of Europe, the presence of Russia, and at the same time weaken the Pasha, lest he should become too important a power in the Mediterranean. It flatters itself it has attained, by its present policy, this double object; for Russia appears disposed to abandon, or *at least to adjourn*, her pretensions in the East, and even her claims to an exclusive protectorate, and as much inclined as England to weaken the Pasha. Prussia adheres to that view. England sees in these dispositions not an embarrassment, but a precious opportunity to seize. Nevertheless, a double set of apprehensions have seized upon her. On the one hand, she fears that, by a sudden attack, the new government at Constantinople may be compelled to seek for safety in the protection of Russia; on the other, that the alliance with France, to which she, with reason, attaches so much value, may be disturbed, or even broken, by the diverging views of the two powers on the Eastern question. These two considerations hold her in suspense,

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

and may even lead her to make some concessions to France in Egypt, to avoid complications which may threaten the French alliance. To what point will this disposition to concession go? It is impossible at present to say how far it may be carried, or how it may be modified by ulterior combinations; but these dispositions appear to me sufficiently pronounced and advanced to indicate to the French Government that it should apply itself to remove existing difficulties, not to create new ones." [1]

[1] M. Guizot à M. Thiers, April 15, 1840; Cap. x. 192, 193.

91. M. Thiers' answer.

On the other hand, the views of M. Thiers, who, however much inclined in secret to espouse the cause of the Pasha, was yet fearful to commit himself openly with Europe, and break with the English alliance, were unfolded in his answer to M. Guizot of 25th April. "Limit yourself to acknowledging the reception of the note proposing a conference, but avoid saying anything which may seem to imply a recognition of its necessity. Say that the French Cabinet regards such a step as calculated to complicate, rather than unravel, the affairs of the East. Avoid expressing any general opinion; confine yourself to limited and detached points. I do not wish to tie my hands; I have had enough of the collective note of last year. I cannot bring myself to conceive measures against Mehemet Ali, which is the point to which the four powers are evidently driving. At the same time, I am not entitled to prevent other powers from following their own inclinations, and I shall oppose no obstacles to their doing so, as long as the interest and honour of France are not wounded. But the project of having recourse to violence against Mehemet Ali appears to me chimerical: in the first place, because his power is more solidly established than is generally supposed; and in the second, because England alone is in a situation to employ these coercive measures, and the risk of doing so would more than compensate the advantage.[2] At the same time, I am not irrevocably wedded to my opinions; and if you perceive that they think otherwise in London,

April 25, 1840.

[2] M. Thiers à M. Guizot, April 25, 1840; Cap. x. 195, 196.

make remonstrances, and if no attention is paid to them, you will receive from me farther orders."

92. Treaty of July 15, 1840.

Whatever may have been the anxiety of M. Thiers to preserve the *statu quo* system, the measures of the allied powers rendered it impossible to maintain it much longer, and drove matters to a crisis. The terms of the treaty of 15th July have been already mentioned,[1] signed by the representatives of the four allied powers, whereby it was agreed that intimation should be made to Mehemet Ali, that if he evacuated Syria and Candia in ten days, he should have his pashalic of Egypt in hereditary right, and that of Syria, with the fortress of St Jean d'Acre, for life; but if these offers were not acceded to, and the necessary orders not given in that time, the offer of the liferent of the pashalic of Acre should be withdrawn. This treaty was concluded by the four powers *alone*, without the concurrence of France, so that the latter power found herself in a manner excluded from the European family. The communication of the treaty, however, which was made on the 18th July, was accompanied with every expression which could soften the irritation likely to be experienced at the court of the Tuileries from this circumstance.[2]

[1] c. xxxii. § 57.

[2] Cap. x. 203, 204.

93. Memorandum of the allied powers. July 18.

"The French Government," said the memorandum communicating the treaty, "has received during the whole course of the negotiations, which began in the autumn of last year, the most incontestable proofs of the desire of the courts of Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia, to arrive at an accord with the French Government in regard to the arrangements necessary for the pacification of the Levant. France may appreciate, from that circumstance, the importance which the courts attach to the moral effect likely to be produced by the harmony and combined action of the five powers in an affair attended with such grave consequences. The four powers have perceived with regret that their efforts to attain this end have been unsuccessful; and although, recently, they

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

have proposed to France to unite with them for the execution of an arrangement between the Sultan and Mehemet Ali, based on the views which the French ambassador proposed in the end of last year, the Government of France has not thought fit to accede to that combination. It has annexed to its corporation with the other powers, conditions which they regarded as inconsistent with the independence of the Ottoman empire, and the future peace of Europe. In these circumstances, nothing remained to the four powers but either to abandon to chance the future of the great affairs which they were called on to adjust, to manifest thus their impotence, and leave Europe exposed to constantly increasing hazards, or to advance in their own line, without the co-operation of France, and of themselves effect the pacification of the Levant. Placed in that alternative, and profoundly convinced of the necessity of a prompt decision to adjust the many important interests now at stake, they have considered it their duty to adopt the latter alternative. They have, in consequence, concluded a convention with the Sultan, in virtue of which the complications in the Levant will, they trust, be satisfactorily adjusted. In signing that convention, the four powers have felt the deepest regret at finding themselves momentarily separated from France in an affair so essentially European. They indulge the hope that their separation from France, on that subject, will be of short duration; and that it will in no degree disturb the sincere friendship which they so ardently desire to maintain with that power."[1]

[1] Memorandum, July 18, 1840; Moniteur, July 20.

94. Indignation in France on hearing of this treaty.

Notwithstanding the delicate manner in which this unwelcome intelligence was conveyed to the French Government, there was enough in it to awaken the jealousy of the Government and rouse the passions of the people. M. Thiers had expected the immediate signature of a treaty between the Sultan and the Pasha, which should have adjusted their differences according to his ideas; great therefore was his indignation when he found that

he had been anticipated by the allied powers, and that the affairs of the Levant were to be adjusted by the coalesced powers alone without the concurrence of France, and in direct opposition to its wishes. The public unanimously shared these sentiments. The French felt themselves wounded in their national honour, and, more sensitive than any people in Europe in that particular, they immediately took fire. The cry was universal for immediate and great preparations for war, in order to prevent the ratification of the treaty. "It is not yet ratified," it was said: "the cabinets will recoil from a step so injurious to French influence; to prevent the ratification of the treaty, we must arm on a gigantic scale. When Europe sees France determined on a national war, it will hesitate before adopting a repressive system, founded on the ignoring of its influence." These sentiments were loudly re-echoed by the public press. Not only the revolutionary journals, but the Royalist and Legitimist, called out aloud for war. The *National* indulged in the most menacing expressions; and even the *Journal des Débats*, understood to express the sentiments of the Tuileries, so far from restraining, loudly applauded the warlike enthusiasm, and in an especial manner directed it against England.[1]

[1] Journal des Débats, July 21, 1840; Cap. x. 208, 209.

95. Vigorous measures of the French Cabinet.

A soldier who had fought at Jemappes, a sovereign who had acted at Antwerp, Louis Philippe was sensitively alive to the national honour, and deemed no sacrifices too great or dangers too serious to protect it from insult. He cordially acquiesced, accordingly, in the vigorous measures proposed by M. Thiers, and unanimously adopted by the Cabinet. It was immediately determined—1. To raise the army to the war establishment of 400,000 men, in anticipation of a serious continental as well as maritime contest; 2. To adopt a great system of fortifications around Paris, so as to eschew the dangers which had proved so fatal in 1814 and 1815; 3. To augment largely the fleet in the Mediterranean, so as to enable the French

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

navy to act with effect in a European conflict; and, 4. To open an extraordinary credit of 100,000,000 francs (£4,000,000), authorised by a mere royal ordonnance on the responsibility of Ministers. These were very bold steps, and in another state of the public mind might have caused no small danger to the Ministers who recommended them. But in the present excited state of the public mind, and in a matter in which the honour of France was involved, no danger was to be apprehended from the adoption of any warlike measures, how decided soever.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 209, 210; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 304, 305, 306.

96. Division of opinion on the fortification of Paris.

A great difference of opinion, however, soon arose as to the *mode* in which the fortification of Paris was to be carried into effect. The King, with the concurrence of the Cabinet, inclined to the side of *forts détachés*, erected on all the eminences around Paris within half cannon-shot of each other, and each a fortress in itself capable of standing a separate siege. By means of this cross fire all access to the capital from without would be rendered impossible till the forts themselves were subdued; and beyond all doubt, if these detached forts had been in existence in 1814, the march of the Allies upon Paris after Napoleon's movement upon St Dizier would have terminated in disaster. This plan of defence also presented the immense advantage of keeping the horrors of war and the real defence of the capital at a distance from its edifices, and of giving the executive at the head of the army the means, by the guns of these, the entire command of the capital without firing a shot in the streets. But on this very account the project was from the first the object of jealousy and opposition to the Republican party, who had no desire to see the Government in possession of a line of forts around the capital, from which they might readily reduce any insurrection among its inhabitants, by either threatening them with the terrors of a bombardment, or cutting off their supplies of provisions from the country. For these reasons they strongly contended for the *enceinte continue*, or entire line of fortifications, which they hoped, without separating the soldiers

from the citizens, would convert the capital into *one* huge intrenched camp, in which, from the magnitude of their numbers, they themselves would have the superiority. The Government, however, held out steadily for the *forts détachés*, and, taking advantage of the general warlike fervour, commenced their construction, which was vigorously proceeded with. Their localities revealed the true idea which had prompted their construction; for it was soon discovered that they would be more formidable to an enemy *within* than *without*, and that by means of their converging fire any insurrection in the capital might hereafter be easily subdued.[1]*

[1] Cap. x. 210, 211.

97. Great preparations of M. Thiers.

Placed at Paris in the centre of the excitement, and, in a manner, in the front rank of the conflict, M. Thiers was in his element, and beheld in the effervescence around him the *beau idéal* in his conception of civilised society—popular excitement controlled by military force. His preparations were on the most formidable scale, and sufficiently proved that his administrative talents were fully equal to his oratorical abilities. Twelve new regiments were ordered to be raised, the artillery put on the war establishment, and the battalions and squadrons all filled up to their war footing. He boasted that in a few months he would have 400,000 regular troops under arms, besides 300,000 movable national guards. When he came to details, however, M. Thiers encountered many unexpected difficulties, and acquired melancholy proof how much the resources of France, in all but men, had been wasted by the devastation of the Revolution. For artillery horses he was obliged to go to Switzerland, for cavalry to Germany; the guns for the artillery could only be augmented by recourse to a house in connection

* The Author is in possession of a very curious map, showing the proposed position of all the detached forts round Paris, *and the range of their guns.* Those of no less than six *cross each other in the Rue St Antoine and the Place of the Bastile*, the constant centre of insurrection!—A curious and instructive circumstance, that the fire of a hundred guns should be in the end concentrated upon the spot where the first triumph of popular insurrection took place!

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

with Russia; large steamboats required to be purchased in England. Thus for all the *matériel* of war, both by land and sea, France was obliged to have recourse to her enemies—a melancholy reflection for a country which had once sent forth from its own resources the armies of Louis XIV. and Napoleon, and in 1812 had despatched one hundred thousand horses into Russia; but easily accounted for, when it is recollected that France was now divided among ten millions of landed proprietors, the great majority of whom, so far from being able to feed a horse, were barely able to feed themselves.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 217, 218.

98. M. Guizot's memorandum to the English Government. July 24, 1840.

Farther removed from the centre of agitation, and not equally enamoured as M. Thiers of revolutionary excitement and military power, M. Guizot was in a situation in London to judge more correctly the true state of affairs, and at the same time appreciate the real anxiety of the British Government to adjust the affairs of the East without coming to an actual rupture with the French Cabinet. While, therefore, he officially addressed an able memorandum to Lord Palmerston on the treaty of 15th July, defending the conduct of France in regard to the affairs of the Levant,* he was careful to transmit to Paris, by circuitous channels, detailed information to the King as to the real views of the British

* "La France a toujours désiré, dans l'affaires de l'Orient, marcher d'accord avec la Grande Bretagne, l'Autriche, la Prusse, et la Russie. Elle n'a jamais été mue dans sa conduite que par l'intérêt de la paix. Elle n'a jamais jugé les propositions qui lui ont été faites que d'un point de vue général, et jamais du point de vue de son intérêt particulier. Jugeant de ce point de vue, elle a consideré comme mal conçus tous les projets qui avaient pour but d'arracher de Méhémet Ali par la force des armes les portions de l'Empire Turc qu'il occupe actuellement. La France ne croit pas cela bon pour le Sultan; car on tendrait ainsi à lui donner ce qu'il ne pourrait ni administrer ni conserver. La France s'est surtout prononcée contre le projet dont l'adoption devait entraîner l'emploi de la force, parcequ'elle ne voyait pas distinctement les moyens dont les cinq Puissances pouvaient disposer. Mais au surplus, sans insister sur la question que pourrait faire naître cette manière de procéder à son égard, la France le déclare de nouveau: Elle considère comme peu réfléchie, comme peu prudente, une conduite qui consistera à prendre des résolutions sans moyens de les exécuter, ou à les exécuter par des moyens insuffisans ou dangereux."—*Memorandum adressé au* VICOMTE PALMERSTON *par* M. GUIZOT, July 24, 1840. CAPEFIGUE, x. 218-219, note.

Cabinet, and the ease with which affairs might be adjusted, and the serious dangers of a general war averted. These representations fell in too completely with the King's own pacific views not to meet with a ready attention; and he was the more inclined to attend to them, that unmistakable symptoms showed the terror which had seized upon the monied interest in consequence of the prospect of a general war. By an ordonnance of 10th September, M. Thiers had declared the necessity for the fortification of Paris urgent, and opened a credit of 600,000 francs (£24,000) to begin them. In the midst of these warlike preparations, and while columns of cavalry and infantry, with long trains of artillery, were constantly traversing the streets, the public funds fell seventeen per cent in the space of three months: they sunk from 86 on 6th July to 69 on 2d October.[1] These alarming symptoms, and the general effervescence of the public mind, excited the serious alarm of the King; and in order to discover if possible a mode of escaping from the dangers with which he was surrounded, in the middle of September he commanded M. Guizot to meet him at the Chateau d'Eu in Normandy. The ambassador quickly obeyed the summons, and long and anxious conferences took place between them, upon which the destinies of Europe depended.[2]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxiii. 93; Doc. Hist.

[2] Cap. x. 249, 250; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 304-306.

99. M. Guizot's opinions on the Eastern question.

Louis Philippe was seriously desirous to uphold the national dignity and independence; but he had no inclination to retrograde to the revolutionary fervour of 1830, to which the policy of his prime-minister was hurrying him; and his difficulty was, that, as matters were situated, he did not see how he could extricate himself from the one without compromising the other. M. Guizot expounded his ideas to him on both points with his wonted clearness and precision. He observed that what was now passing in England was rather an accident than a settled policy; that the French alliance was suspended, not abandoned; that by a few concessions on both sides a good

CHAP. XXXIV.

1840.

understanding might be restored; and that the declamations of the journals on either side were not to be taken as a true test of the general feeling. On the next point, whether it was possible to venture upon the experiment of a conservative cabinet, the opinions of M. Guizot were equally decided. He thought that the circumstance which most powerfully influenced external nations in their opinion of what was going on in France, was the over-excitement of the public mind, the distress of material interests, the want of consistency in the conduct of Government, of unity in the views of the Cabinet, and of the majority of the Chamber. It was by no means impossible, he thought, to form a government which should be in harmony with the majority of the Chamber, foreseeing in a conservative sense, and with the mission to temper the political fever, which left no moderation in opinion, and was evidently hurrying on the nation to the most dreadful catastrophe. The danger arose from having, in the composition of M. Thiers' Cabinet, removed to a distance all the men of weight in parliament, and who had rendered immense service to the monarchy and the cause of order.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 251, 252.

100. Withdrawal of the French fleet from the Levant. Oct. 7.

These opinions were too consonant to the pacific disposition and prudent character of the King not to meet with his entire concurrence; and he in secret resolved, when an opportunity occurred, to remove a Minister from the lead in his councils whose measures were tending so rapidly to embroil him with the whole of Europe. Whether it was that M. Thiers divined these views on the part of the King, or that he himself recoiled from the prospect of encountering the hostility of all Europe on the Rhine for the sake of maintaining the influence of France in Egypt, certain it is that, after this interview in the Chateau d'Eu, the policy of the Cabinet underwent a total revolution. Orders were given to Admiral Duland to leave the mouth of the Dardanelles, where the French fleet had lain close to

the British all the summer; and after performing several insignificant evolutions to conceal the real object in view, it made sail for Toulon, where it arrived by the end of October. Meanwhile, the English fleet, under Admirals Stopford and Napier, entered upon the short and brilliant campaign already recorded,[1] which terminated in the capture of Acre, and the entire expulsion of the Egyptians from Syria. These events were decisive. The French had retired from the theatre of conflict, the English had triumphed in it. In vain M. Thiers sought to conceal his mortification by declaring "that the French fleet was more at his disposal in the roads of Toulon than in the seas of Syria; and that, by means of the telegraph, he could send it everywhere to combat the allied squadrons." The flimsy device deceived no one. Every man in France, so eminently a warlike nation, saw that in leaving the Levant, at the very time when hostilities were commencing, was the most decisive shunning of the conflict. In his note of 8th October, addressed to Guizot, he contented himself with declaring that "France would in no event consent to the dethronement of Mehemet Ali."* This, however, was what none of the allied powers desired; the expulsion of his forces from Syria, and its restoration to the Porte, being the object to which their efforts were directed. The crisis therefore had now passed in the East; there was no longer any subject of contention between France and the allied powers. It must be confessed, France was con-

[1] Ante, c. xxxii. § 62-69.

"Les plus chers intérêts de l'Europe se rattachaient à la continuation de l'existence de la Turquie. Cet empire tenu dans l'abaissement, ne pouvait servir qu'à l'agrandissement des Etats voisins, au détriment de l'équilibre général; et sa ruine aurait amené, dans les positions existantes des grandes Puissances, un changement qui aurait modifié l'aspect du globe entier. La France, et les autres Puissances avec elle, ont si bien compris ce résultat éventuel, que de concert avec ses alliés elle a constamment et loyalement travaillé *à la conservation de l'Empire Ottoman*, quelque profondément que leurs intérêts respectifs pussent être engagés relativement à la conservation ou à la ruine de ce royaume. Mais la partie intégrale de l'Empire Ottoman s'étend des rives de la Mer Noire à celles de la Mer Rouge. Il est aussi essentiel de garantir l'indépendance de l'Egypte et de la Syrie que l'indépendance des Dardanelles et du Bosphore."—M. THIERS *à* M. GUIZOT, October 8, 1840. CAPEFIGUE, x. 259.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

tent to forego a tempting prize, and England avoided a serious danger on this occasion, for which the latter power was indebted to the moderation of the French sovereign, the diplomatic ability of Lord Palmerston, and the strength of the European alliance, but by no means to the magnitude of its national resources. For such had been the prostration of the British forces by sea and land at this period, in consequence of the wretched system of economy which had been forced upon the Government by the reformed House of Commons, that France had fifteen ships of the line in the Levant, while England had only nine; and while the former had three hundred thousand regular soldiers ready to be marched down to the coasts of the Channel, not twenty thousand men, after providing for the necessary garrisons, could have been assembled to meet them on the British shores.[1]*

[1] Note, Oct. 8, 1840; Cap. x. 254-257.

101. Immediate cause of M. Thiers' downfall.

But although the crisis had passed for Europe, it was by no means over with the French Minister; and the vacillation of system which saved the world from a general war, proved fatal to the Minister who had so nearly induced it. M. Thiers was worse than defeated—he was humiliated; he had not met death in fair fight—he had shunned it. He had lost the confidence of all par-

* M. Thiers wrote, on the 3d October 1840, to M. Guizot in London: "They (England) have gratuitously sacrificed for a secondary interest an alliance which has maintained the integrity of the Ottoman empire much more effectually than it will be by the Treaty of 15th July. It will be said that France has yielded to the wishes of England, and purchased its alliance by that sacrifice. The answer to this is obvious. France, once in union with the views of the allies, will have made none of those essential sacrifices which no independent nation should make to another, but only that of a way of viewing certain questions of boundaries. But they left her no choice. They offered to admit her into an alliance already formed. From that moment she required to isolate herself, and she has done so. But, faithful to her pacific policy, she has never ceased to counsel moderation to Mehemet Ali. Though armed and at liberty to act, she will do all in her power to preserve the world from the catastrophe with which it is threatened. With the exception of sacrifices which might affect her honour, she will do everything to preserve peace. If at present she holds this language to the British Cabinet, it is less in the spirit of complaint than to prove the honesty of her policy, not only towards Great Britain, but the entire world, of which no state, how powerful soever it may be, can venture to despise the opinion."—M. THIERS to M. GUIZOT, October 3, 1840. CAPEFIGUE, x. 257, 259, note.

ties—of the Conservatives, because he had brought Europe to the edge of a general war; of the Revolutionists, because he had avoided it. It was no difficult matter, in these circumstances, to effect his downfall; and his own impatience and excitable temperament soon brought about the desired opportunity. In the midst of his warlike enthusiasm, M. Thiers had desired the early convocation of the Chambers to sanction his great expenditure, and the King had consented to it, in the hope that the pent-up passions of the nation might find vent in the tribune, and the war of tongues supersede that of swords. The Chambers, accordingly, stood convoked for the 5th November. But an insurmountable difficulty arose in regard to the terms in which the recent events were to be alluded to in the speech from the throne. M. Thiers insisted for menacing expressions, in which the flag of defiance was still to be flung in the face of Europe. The King thought this was a senseless and perilous bravado, which might lead to the most serious dangers. He refused his consent, therefore, to the insertion of the hazardous paragraph, and the consequence was, that M. Thiers resigned with his whole cabinet, and their resignations were at once accepted.[1] *

[1] Moniteur, Oct. 27, 1840; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 305-308; Cap. x. 261, 263.

* The passage desired by M. Thiers, and objected to by the King, was as follows:—"Au moment où finissait la dernière session, un traité a été signé entre la Porte Ottomane, l'Angleterre, l'Autriche, la Prusse, et la Russie, pour régler le différend survenu entre le Sultan et le Vice-roi d'Egypte. Cet acte important *accompli sans la participation de la France*, et dans les vues d'une politique à laquelle elle n'a point adhéré, pouvait dans l'exécution amener de dangereuses conséquences. La France devait les prévoir, *et se disposer à faire face à tous les évènemens.* Mon gouvernement a pris sous sa responsabilité toutes les mesures qu'autorisaient les lois et que prescrivait sa situation nouvelle. La France, qui continue à souhaiter sincèrement la paix, demeure fidèle à la politique que vous avez plus d'une fois appuyée par d'éclatans suffrages. Jalouse d'assurer l'indépendance et l'intégrité de l'Empire Ottoman, elle les croit conciliables avec l'existence du Vice-roi d'Egypte, devenu lui-même un des élémens nécessaires à la force de cet empire. Mais les évènemens qui se passaient pourraient amener des conséquences plus graves. Les mesures prises jusq'ici par mon Gouvernement pourraient alors ne plus suffire. Il importait donc de les compléter *par des mesures nouvelles*, pour lesquelles le concours des deux Chambres était nécessaire. J'ai dû les convoquer. Elles penseront comme moi que la France, qui n'a pas été la première à livrer le repos du monde à la fortune des armes, *doit se tenir prête à agir, le jour où elle croirait*

CHAP. XXXIV.

1840.

102. The new Ministry. Oct. 29, 1840.

The resignation of the Minister having been foreseen, and, in fact, prepared for by the King, there was no difficulty in arranging the new Cabinet. There was no ministerial interregnum on this, as there had been on so many previous occasions, when real embarrassment had been experienced. To M. Guizot, who had been the chief instrument in its formation, naturally belonged the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Marshal Soult was again prevailed on to resume the onerous duties of President of the Council. The other offices were so arranged as to show that the Doctrinaires and Conservatives had at length got entire possession of the government, and that a cabinet was formed on the basis on which the King was desirous to conduct it.* So far the task was easy; but it was by no means equally so to conduct the administration so as to calm the general effervescence, without exciting distrust and dissatisfaction in the minds of the people. So exciting had been the conduct and language of M. Thiers during the last four months, and so great the effervescence produced by the open encouragement given to revolutionary ideas, and the gauntlet thrown down to all Europe, that it was no easy matter to say how the nation was to be brought back to the sobriety of rational ideas, or taught wisdom without undergoing the ordeal of suffering.[1]

[1] L. Blanc, v. 392-409; Cap. x. 268, 273; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 305-309; Moniteur, Oct. 29, 1840.

The Chambers met, pursuant to proclamation, on the 5th November. The King was received in grave silence,

l'équilibre Européen sérieusement menacé. J'aime à compter plus que jamais sur votre patriotique concours. Vous voulez comme moi que la France soit forte et grande. Aucun sacrifice ne vous coûterait pour lui conserver dans le monde le rang qui lui appartient. Elle n'en veut par déchoir. La France est fortement attachée à la paix, mais elle ne l'achèterait pas d'un prix indigne d'elle; et votre Roi, qui a mis sa gloire à la conserver au monde, veut laisser intact à son fils ce dépôt sacré d'indépendance nationale que la Révolution Française a mis dans ses mains."—CAPEFIGUE, x. 263, 264.

* Cabinet of 29th October 1840:—Marshal Soult, President of the Council and War Minister; M. Guizot, Minister of Foreign Affairs; M. Martin (du Nord), of Public Worship and Justice; M. Duchatel, of the Interior; M. Haumann, of Finance; Admiral Duperré, of Marine; M. Cunin-Gridaine, of Commerce; M. Teste, of Public Works; M. Villemain, of Public Instruction.—*Moniteur*, October 29, 1840.

interrupted only by some faint cheers from the Centre of the Assembly. "I have felt," said he, "the necessity of convoking you before the ordinary time when the Chamber assembles. The measures which the Emperor of Austria, the Queen of Great Britain, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor of Russia, have adopted in concert to regulate the relations of the Sultan and the Pasha of Egypt, have imposed on me serious duties. I have the dignity of our country as much at heart as its security and repose. In persevering in that conciliatory and pacific policy, of which, during six years, we have been reaping the fruits, I have put France in a situation to make face against any events which might arise from the course of events in the East. The extraordinary credits which, with that view, have been opened, will be submitted to you; you will appreciate the motives which led to them. I still indulge the hope that the general peace will not be disturbed. It is necessary to the common welfare of Europe, to the prosperity of every nation, to the progress of civilisation. I trust to your wisdom to enable me to preserve it, as I would reckon on your patriotism, if the honour of France, and the place it occupies among nations, should demand from it fresh sacrifices. It is with no less anxiety that, for another reason, I have appealed to your loyal assistance. Impotence has not extinguished the anarchical passions. Under whatever form they may present themselves, my Government will find in the existing laws sufficient guarantees for the public safety. As to myself, in the trials which Providence imposes upon me, I feel only that I owe thanks to Heaven for the protection which it has accorded to me, and have no duty so great as to prove, by my assiduous attention to the interests and happiness of France, my gratitude for the affection with which I am at this moment surrounded."[1]

103. King's speech at opening the Chamber. Nov. 5, 1840.

[1] Moniteur, Nov. 6, 1856; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 310.

Great was the anxiety felt upon the debate on the Address, which, as usual, was an echo of the speech; for it was felt to be the turning-point of French policy, both

CHAP. XXXIV.

1840.

104. Debate on the Address.

externally and internally. On it depended not merely whether peace was to be preserved, and the dogs of war kept in their leash, but whether the march of revolutionary ideas was to be stopped, and the nation retained in the unobtrusive paths of pacific industry. "France," said M. Thiers, "preferred a conference at Vienna, and demanded Egypt and Syria in hereditary right for the Pasha; while, on the other hand, the four coalesced powers insisted that he should be confined to Egypt. Such was the state of affairs when the ministry of 1st March succeeded to power. There was no longer a treaty, but an ultimatum, signified to France, and to France isolated from Europe. France alone was in presence of England, and England believed that she must yield. The cabinet of 1st March felt that France had immense interests in the East; on that point they were unanimous; but the great point was to gain time, for our military and naval preparations were not complete. England in reality was not to be feared, for she would willingly have coalesced with us, could she have found a decent pretext for doing so; so great was her dread of seeing the Russians established at Constantinople. It is true that France was desirous of entering into a direct and formal engagement with the Pasha; but that was only because it was the only means of extricating an affair otherwise insoluble.

105. Continued.

"Would you know why the treaty of 15th July was precipitated, and why it was for some days concealed from France? It was because the allies saw in the insurrection of the Druses a means of action which had not hitherto presented itself; and because they wished Admiral Stopford to stop the Turkish fleet, and take the Egyptian, before France was aware of what was going forward. Was not this act unworthy deception after ten years of alliance? France felt that affront. It is a mistake to say that I alone felt it, and that I drew my coun-

try after me. To do so would have been impossible; I only followed—I could not lead it. How many came to me and said, 'Support the dignity of France, and an entire nation will support you.' I own I shared, as every good Frenchman should, in these sentiments, and I wished to follow out the conduct which they prescribed. The more that I examined the question, the more I reflect on what passed in my breast in those terrible days, the more strongly I felt that if France receded on this occasion, she would lose her place among nations. *I knew I was about, perhaps, to make the blood of ten generations flow;* but the thought always recurred, if France retires, she does so in presence of Europe—all the world will know it: the Government, the Chambers, are engaged: if she retires, she loses her rank. If that monarchy which our hands have reared, to the formation of which, during ten years, we have directed all our efforts,—if it is to be found degrading the country instead of elevating it, I can no longer bear the reproach of having belonged to it. I prefer the obscurity of private life.

106. Concluded.

"To go to war immediately on account of the treaty, was impossible. The great thing was to gain time in order to complete our armaments, which had been sadly neglected during the long peace. Thence it was that the late cabinet proposed to the King to raise the army to 639,000 men, and to call into active service 300,000 national guards. Great as these forces are, they would have proved insufficient if Paris had not been fortified, and thence the proposition to do so, made not as a complaisant courtier, but as a sincere and devoted citizen. We were not in a condition to act before next May; and in the mean time the advice given to the Pasha was, not to pass the Taurus, to defend Syria, Acre, and Alexandria, but to invoke the mediation of France; *and if the war continued, France, with all its forces, would support him in the following spring.* I accept the responsibility of all I

CHAP. XXXIV. 1840.

have done : it was by me that Mehemet Ali was curbed ; it was M. Cochelet and M. Walewski who conveyed to him my wishes. It was indispensable to gain time at that crisis; and that was the real object of the note of 8th October. Such was the policy, such the aim of the late cabinet ; if it is not now to be carried into effect, let those answer for it who have given different counsels to the sovereign." [1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxiii. 332, 333; Moniteur, Nov. 25, 1840.

107. Answer of M. Guizot.

On the other hand, it was answered by M. Guizot : " Would you know the real situation, the ultimatum of the cabinet of 1st March ? I will tell you in one word : It was war—war certain and inevitable. Are you willing to incur its terrible chances for an accident of diplomacy, the debates of negotiators ? It is not the stranger whom we would have to combat, if we engaged in such a contest ; it is the factions in our own bosom who torture the words of the treaty of 15th July, in order to render it the firebrand which is to set the world in flames. What right have they to speak to us of having dishonoured France, by accepting peace on any terms ? What right have they to suppose us less patriotic, or less disposed to take up arms, if necessary for the national safety or honour ? The cabinet of 29th October is fitted to reassure all minds, to restore commerce, and all the interests which emanate from peace. Who is there amongst us, the friend of his country, who is not desirous to see it emerge from a crisis so menacing to society, and which is so evidently and fearfully rousing the revolutionary passions ?

108. Continued.

" We are told that France is isolated, that she is put to the ban of Europe, that the great powers act independent of her. Be it so. Who isolated her ? Not the allied powers who signed the treaty of 15th July, but the cabinet of 1st March, which *began of its own accord an isolated negotiation with the Pasha of Egypt*, without the privity of the other powers, and which, when discovered, led to the treaty of 15th July. MM. Cochelet and Walewski, our diplomatic

agents in Egypt, had opened a negotiation with Mehemet Ali long before that treaty was signed, which was purely a defensive measure against an isolated act of aggression on our part. That was the real cause of the treaty of 15th July. When once it was signed, matters looked serious; it was necessary to take precautions, and therefore I approved of the armaments. But there was in reality no cause for war. There was certainly a difference of views between France and the allied powers on the affairs of the East, which I deplore, but nothing more.

109. Concluded.

"Whenever a feeling unusually warm is manifested in France, Europe believes a revolution is approaching. Whenever the powers approach each other, or act in concert, France sees a coalition. That is quite natural on both sides. None can be surprised at it on either; but men of sense, who have influence on public affairs, should judge coolly in such emergencies. I say now to you as I have often said to others, You deceive yourselves; we are not in reality menaced with the revolution which you apprehend: and in like manner I say to you, You are wrong in feeling such alarm for the measures of the allied powers; they are defensive merely; they will lead to nothing if you do not provoke hostile measures. The treaty of 15th July has undoubtedly placed France in a serious situation; it has isolated it from Europe, and induced a coldness between it and its best and surest ally. That is the truth in its full extent; it is against that we must be on our guard—against that we must make preparation. But yet there must be a certain measure even in purely defensive measures. If you assume an attitude, and make preparations corresponding not to the actual state of the fact, but to what you erroneously suppose to be the fact, you yourselves run France into the danger which you say she has incurred; you are yourselves the authors of the danger; you compel the formation of the coalition which is the object of so much apprehension."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Nov. 27, 1840; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 340, 341.

29820

CHAP. XXXIV.

1840.

The new Cabinet obtained a decisive majority on this question; the division was 247 to 161. More than even by this large division against him, M. Thiers was damaged by the withering accusations brought against him, of having withheld for several days the publication of important intelligence, particularly of the treaty of 15th July, with a view to speculation in the Funds, in the benefit of which he largely participated. M. Thiers indignantly repelled these accusations, and there was no proof of their truth; but the honour of a minister must be like that of Calphurnia—it should not even be suspected; and men observed that no such stories were afloat when Count Molé and M. Guizot were at the head of affairs. This division put the new Ministry, in the mean time, in a secure position, and enabled them to carry on with some confidence the negotiations with England and the northern powers for the adjustment of the affairs of the East. But as the majority was composed of a coalition of many parties, it shared in the weakness of all such confederacies, and Government, during the remainder of the session, cautiously abstained from bringing forward any measure which might betray the latent seeds of dissolution which were implanted in its bosom.[1]

110. Division in favour of Government. Nov. 28.

[1] Cap. x. 282-284; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 347, 383; Moniteur, Nov. 10, 1840.

111. Continuance of the fortifications of Paris.

In one particular, however, the policy of the late Cabinet was continued with only a partial modification. The FORTIFICATION OF PARIS continued to be the object of special attention from Government. The commission to whom, in 1836,* when M. Thiers was

* The report of the commission in 1836 was in these terms:—"Qu'il soit élevé une muraille d'enceinte flanquée, surmontée d'un chemin de ronde crénelé, enveloppant les plus grandes masses d'habitation des faubourgs extérieurs de Paris, avec fossé là où cette disposition sera nécessaire. Que la trace de cette muraille embrasse les hauteurs qui dominent la ville, en suivant les directions les plus favorables à la défense, eu égard à la configuration du terrain; qu'elle soit assez haute pour être à l'abri de l'escalade, et assez épaisse pour ne pouvoir être ouverte qu'avec des batteries de siège; qu'il soit établi sur les parties de cette enceinte où le besoin s'en fera sentir des bastions susceptibles d'être armés d'artillerie, pour la flanquer, couvrir de leurs feux ses

President of the Council, the matter had been remitted, had reported in favour of a mixed system, consisting of an *enceinte continue*, with bastions and a ditch, protected in front by detached works upon advantageous eminences, intended to keep off the incendiary batteries of the enemy. Marshal Soult in person brought the matter before the Chamber, and insisted strongly on the necessity of the case, which admitted of no delay, and for which 13,000,000 francs had been already voted. The entire cost of the proposed works he calculated at 140,000,000 francs (£5,600,000), but he made no concealment of his opinion that the independence of France might come to depend on their completion. M. Thiers strongly advocated their necessity, but supported the *enceinte continue* in preference to the *forts détachés*, in which he was followed by the whole Liberal and Republican press, which loudly declaimed against the latter system as nothing more than a circle of bastiles, with which it was proposed to surround and overawe the capital. The case was happily summed up by M. Pagès de l'Ariége, who said that the one party demanded the *enceinte continue* in the name of nationality, the other the *forts détachés* in name of the monarchy.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Jan. 21 and Feb. 1, 1841; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 7-16.

112. Marshal Soult's military view of the question.

Marshal Soult, in a military point of view, argued that a great city can never be effectually defended but by advanced and detached works, which may be each capable of sustaining a separate siege, and prevent the enemy from approaching so near as to be able to set its build-

approches, et éclairer autant que possible la gorge des ouvrages extérieurs, qui formeront la première ligne de défense.

"Qu'il soit construit en avant et autour de cette enceinte, notamment à la rive droite de la Seine, sur tous les points les plus favorables à la défense, des ouvrages en état de soutenir un siège, et fermés à la gorge. Leur objet sera d'éloigner les batteries incendiaires de l'ennemi, de protéger les diverses positions que pourraient occuper les forces défensives que les circonstances auraient amenées sous Paris, et de renfermer une grande partie du matériel à la défense."—*Rapport de la Commission*, Nov. 8, 1836. CAPEFIGUE, x. 285, 286, note.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1841.

ings on fire by shells. In confirmation of this he cited the siege of Genoa in 1799, where the defence was conducted by Massena, and the utility of advanced forts was so strongly experienced that the conflict to the very last never reached the actual walls of the place. To carry the Liberals along with them, the Government adopted the mixed system recommended by the commission of 1836; but the whole strength of the fortifications was thrown by Soult's advice into the external forts, the *enceinte continue* being little more than an expensive *muraille d'octroi.* This modified project was adopted by the Chamber by a majority of 75—the numbers being 237 to 162 in the Deputies, and in the Peers by 147 to 85. The Government, to assuage the terrors of the Republicans, agreed that the detached forts were not to be armed without a vote of the Chambers, and that the artillery destined for that purpose, *amounting to two thousand pieces,* should in the mean time be deposited at Bourges. To us, who have seen the defence of the lines of Torres Vedras and the siege of Sebastopol, there can be no room for doubt that the opinion of the veteran Marshal was, in a military point of view, the better founded. Certainly an invading army, even of 200,000 men, could have little chance of subduing Paris, if in the principal detached forts with which it is surrounded they found a Malakhoff or a Redan, defended by a Todtleben or a Gortschakoff.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Jan. 27 and 28, 1841; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 12, 18, 39, 40.

113. Alarming state of the finances.

But in the middle of these warlike undertakings, which the exposed situation of Paris, so near the north-eastern frontier, the most exposed of the kingdom, without doubt rendered necessary, and the want of which the campaigns of 1814 and 1815 had too fatally demonstrated, the state of the finances became every day more alarming, and M. Hermann, with alarming statistical accuracy and without disguise, pointed it out to the Chamber. During his short ministry of eight months, M. Thiers had cost the nation, of supplementary credits beyond the estimated expendi-

ture, no less than 185,000,000 francs (£7,400,000);* and M. Hermann calculated that if the same rate of expenditure were to go on for two years longer, as the late ministry had intended, the deficit would amount to 800,000,000 francs (£32,000,000), which could only be provided for by a regular loan, the resources of exchequer bills or other temporary expedients being entirely exhausted. Without doubt this burden, heavy as it was, would be esteemed light by the nation, if it was deemed indispensable to the national independence or security. But it was not so clear it would be calmly submitted to if it arose from the impetuous and warlike disposition of a single Minister, who was content to set the world in flames in order to revive the worn-out fervour of the Republic, or realise the dreams of Napoleon for the establishment of French influence on the banks of the Nile.[1]

[1] Moniteur, May 8, 1841; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 335-337; Cap. x. 281.

114. Treaty of Feb. 13, 1841, regarding the East.

The Ministry in France having been changed on the Eastern question, there was no difficulty experienced by the other powers in coming to an accommodation regarding it. By two hatti-sheriffs addressed by the Sultan to Mehemet Ali, the latter was confirmed in the government of Egypt in hereditary right, and provisionally in those of Nubia, Darfour, Sennaar, and Kordofan, and an act of amnesty published in favour of such subjects of the Porte as had revolted, and should return to their allegiance. But such was the influence of Russia in the conferences which preceded this treaty, and such the blindness to the future of the other powers, that a clause was inserted in it binding them to recognise as part of the international law of Europe the treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi,

* SUPPLEMENTARY CREDITS.

	Francs.
Guerre,	134,000,000
Travaux Publics,	7,000,000
Marine,	16,000,000
Achat de Grains,	8,000,000
Imprévues,	20,000,000
	185,000,000
	Or £7,400,000

—*Moniteur*, Jan. 28, 1841; CAPEFIGUE, x. 287.

CHAP. XXXIV.

1841.

in which Russia, as the price of its assistance to the Porte, had extorted the closing of the Dardanelles against the ships of war of all foreign nations. The clause was in these words: "Their Majesties the Emperor of Austria, the King of the French, the Queen of Great Britain, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor of all the Russias, persuaded that their accord offers the surest guarantee for the peace of Europe, the object of their whole solicitude, and being anxious to give to the Sultan a public proof of their respect for the inviolability of his rights of sovereignty, as well as of their desire to confirm the security of his empire, have resolved, on the invitation of the Sultan, to confirm by a solemn act their resolution to conform to the ancient rule of the Ottoman empire, in virtue of which the passage of the Straits of the Bosphorus and of the Dardanelles is to remain *for ever closed to the vessels of war of foreign nations, as long as the Porte shall remain at peace.* And on his side the Sultan declares that he is firmly resolved to maintain in future the rule followed in time past as the immutable law of his empire, by which it is forbidden to the vessels of war of all foreign nations to enter the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus as long as the Ottoman Porte shall enjoy peace, reserving the right to grant firmans of passage to light vessels of war employed in the service of ambassadors of friendly powers."[1]

[1] Treaty, Feb. 13, 1841; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 153, 154; Doc. Hist.

115. Great escape which Europe made at this period.

No doubt can now remain that the crisis which this treaty terminated was of the most violent kind; and that Europe was indebted to the firmness of Louis Philippe, and the wisdom of M. Guizot, for deliverance from a war which not only would have been attended by the most fearful devastation and effusion of blood, but would probably have terminated in destroying the independence of all the states of the Continent. England and France, the only two powers, it was well known, who were capable of coercing the rapidly-increasing power of Russia, stood on the edge of a desperate conflict, in which all the powers

of Europe were again, as in 1813, to have been arrayed against France, and their arms, instead of being united to defend the liberties of Europe against Muscovite aggression, would have been turned with fratricidal fury against each other. What would have resulted from such a conflict, but a vast and most perilous *addition to the power of Russia*, the state by whose strength and ambition the other states of Europe are most seriously threatened? Without adopting implicitly the hyperbole of M. Thiers, "that the war would steep in blood *ten generations*," it may safely be concluded that it would have done enough in one generation to put in the most imminent hazard the liberties of all Europe. The "war of opinion," which Mr Canning foresaw, would have been induced by M. Thiers; and to what other end could that have led but the dividing Europe into two factions, which would have set not only nation against nation, but class against class, and could have terminated in no other result but a second subjection of the entire Continent to French domination, or the not less withering weight of Muscovite oppression? Every outbreak of the revolutionary spirit, which M. Thiers so strongly evoked, has, during the last half-century, terminated in a vast addition to the power of Russia; and it was no wonder it was so, for she was the last refuge of the destitute when threatened with revolutionary devastation.

116. Reflections on this treaty.

The treaty of 13th July 1841, which *first* recognised as part of the public law of Europe the vast concession relative to the passage of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, extorted from the weakness of Turkey by the strength of Russia by the treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, is one of the most curious instances on record in the annals of mankind of the insensibility of even the ablest statesmen to the consequences of their own actions, and the danger of being directed in public measures by the memory of the past, rather than the anticipation of the future. That both M. Thiers and Lord Palmerston were most able

CHAP. XXXIV. 1841.

statesmen is universally known, and has been sufficiently proved by subsequent history. Both were clear-sighted enough to see that it was by Russia that the liberties of Europe were most seriously menaced; and the conduct of both afterwards proved that they were fully alive to this danger. How, then, did these able men, with their eyes open to this danger, and at the head of the only two nations in the world whose union could avert it, act on this crisis? They mutually, and as it were by common consent, brought the two nations to the verge of a desperate war. They did more; they both, by separate means, adopted measures calculated, without intending it, to paralyse the strength of Turkey, where the onslaught was sure to be made. M. Thiers thought that the best thing he could do for Turkey, as the menaced power, was to cut off from it Egypt and Syria; a proceeding much the same as it would be to set about securing the independence of England by *cutting off from it Scotland and Wales;* and Lord Palmerston, having succeeded in bringing all Europe into his measures, thought he had secured the independence of the Ottoman empire by adopting the Russian treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, closing the Bosphorus and Dardanelles against foreign vessels of war; forgetting that *Russia, with eighteen sail of the line, was already there,* and that the only result of his diplomatic triumph was to leave Constantinople, with its fleet destroyed at Navarino, unsupported, *vis-à-vis* of Sebastopol, with its impregnable bastions and four thousand pieces of cannon.[1]

117. Way in which this was brought about.

The way in which this extraordinary result was brought about is sufficiently plain. M. Thiers, enamoured of revolutionary excitement and imperial projects, was anxious to realise Napoleon's favourite design of establishing French influence on the banks of the Nile; and Lord Palmerston, justly dreading the effects of such an acquisition upon the English possessions in India, to which it was half way, ably and skilfully formed an alliance of the

four European powers to baffle the design. In this he was entirely successful; but meantime, in his anxiety to check the extension of French influence in the Levant, he forgot the growth of Russia's power in the Black Sea. The Russian diplomatists skilfully and eagerly took advantage of this state of things to persuade the European powers to recognise that closing of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus against foreign ships of war, which she had extorted from the weakness of Turkey.[1] Thus did the Black Sea, with the concurrence of all Europe, become a Russian lake, and Constantinople was left at the mercy of its colossal neighbour! Another proof among the many which contemporary history affords, that, situated as the world now is, France and England can never be divided without its turning to the profit of Russia, and that the real pioneers to the advance of despotism are the outbreaks of democracy.

[1] Ante, c. xxxii. § 30.

118. What occasioned the error.

It is sometimes said that, to avert this obvious danger, and erect an effectual barrier against Russian aggression in the East, it would have been better to have let Ibrahim Pasha advance to Constantinople, and substitute the vigour of a new for the decrepitude of a worn-out dynasty. There does not appear to be any solid ground for this opinion. Egyptian tyranny could no more have averted the march of Muscovite ambition than Ottoman weakness had done. Europe at this time was entirely mistaken on this subject. It mistook the transient vigour which *organised and methodised despotism* had given to Mehemet Ali for the rising strength of a regenerated civilisation. Such a thing is impossible in the East, and with the Mahommedan religion. There is no renovation there but that of the sword; no regeneration but the physical one arising from the inroad of northern conquerors. When you superinduce the regularity of European administration upon the oppression of Asiatic government, as was done by the Pasha of Egypt, and the English in India, you give for a time a great impulse to national

CHAP. XXXIV. 1841.

strength, because you introduce a new and far more effective method of extracting their resources out of the people. But this is done only at the expense of present discontent and future ruin; the perfection of European administration, if not tempered by the establishment of European freedom, instead of a blessing, becomes the greatest possible curse to humanity. The universal insurrection of the Druses, and other hill tribes, against Ibrahim Pasha, prove how soon that was discovered by the inhabitants of Asia Minor. The sequel of this History will show whether the same political lesson is not taught by the English possessions in India.

CHAPTER XXXV.

INTERNAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM THE ACCESSION OF SIR R. PEEL IN THE END OF 1834, TO THE FALL OF HIS MINISTRY IN APRIL 1835.

1. Vast effect of the changes in the Currency Laws during the peace.

UNOBSERVED amidst the strife of parties, unmarked by political leaders, unknown to the dominant multitude, one cause of paramount importance and irresistible force was, during the forty years' peace, incessantly acting on the British Empire. THE MUTATIONS OF THE CURRENCY, anticipated before 1819, experienced since that period, furnish the key to all the variations in social happiness which were experienced during that eventful period. They explain the alternations of feverish and short-lived prosperity, and exhausting and long-continued distress, which invariably occurred; they account for the vast political changes which ensued, and the entire alteration in the balance of internal power, and in the tendency of foreign and commercial policy, which occurred during their continuance. Without a constant reference to this paramount and irresistible cause, all attempts to explain the political history of Great Britain during this long period will prove nugatory, and the most important lessons to be derived from contemporary history will be lost.

2. Leading evils of the currency laws.

It has been already explained, that as the great objects of a currency are to be *adequate* and *retainable*, so the greatest possible mistakes which can be committed in regard to the circulating medium, are, to establish it on a basis which is either too narrow or liable to fluctuation.

CHAP. XXXV.

1834.

As gold has from the earliest times been considered as the most precious of metals, and on that account been the great medium of payment and vehicle of commerce among mankind, so it seems, at first sight, the wisest course to establish the currency on that basis, because then it rests on a foundation which is not, in the general case, of a changing or evanescent character, but durable, if any earthly thing is entitled to that appellation in the changing concerns of men. Gold, no doubt, in some political crisis, does change value often to a very considerable degree; but it does so, from its being universally current, much less so than any other commodity; and therefore a currency resting on it as a basis seems more secure than any other which can be figured. These are the principles on which the monetary systems of Great Britain since 1819 have been entirely founded, which, beyond the limit of £14,000,000 issuable by the Bank of England, and about a similar amount by the private banks in the empire, requires the whole circulation to be based on gold, and liable to be expanded or contracted according as the supplies of that metal are abundant or scanty. And these ideas are in themselves so plausible, and the evils of an unlimited issue of paper had been so forcibly illustrated by the French assignats, that it is not surprising that they commanded general assent, and for more than one generation entirely governed the monetary policy of the empire.

3. Grand error from which they spring.

Reflection had, however, in the very outset, revealed to a few sagacious observers, what experience and suffering have now taught even to the most inconsiderate of mankind, that these views are essentially erroneous, and, as applied to a domestic currency intended to sustain industry at home, of the most dangerous tendency. For the purposes of *foreign* transactions, indeed, whether of nations or individuals, it is indispensable to have a currency consisting either of the precious metals, or of paper convertible on demand into them, because none other will pass current in foreign nations. But with regard to the

currency which is to be retained *at home*, and conduct the commerce of men in internal transactions, the requirement is just the reverse. The object of such a currency is to be adequate and durable, neither liable to be unduly accumulated at one time nor extensively withdrawn at another. Unless this is the case, money will be plentiful on some occasions, and encourage speculation by the rise of prices and the facility of getting it; and scarce on others, and so discourage enterprise, from the withdrawal of the circulating medium, and consequent fall of prices. The greatest social evils which can afflict an industrious and commercial community are induced by a circulating medium for internal transactions which is liable to fluctuation, and are capable of being avoided by one which is not liable to change.

4. Danger of a currency mainly based on the retention of gold and silver.

The very circumstance which renders gold and silver the best possible foundation for the currency which is to conduct the foreign transactions of a country, renders it the worst for that which is to sustain its domestic industry. The reason is obvious: *being always so much in request, they are the first to go away.* Being the most coveted and precious of all articles, they are universally acceptable, and are more readily received than manufactures or other merchandise in payment of foreign importation, or in liquidation of foreign loans. Hence, whenever a great importation of foreign produce takes place into such a nation, or any adventitious cause occasions a great export of the precious metals, the currency, and with it the credit of the State, is shaken to its foundation, and undertakings the most necessary are suspended from want of the necessary funds to carry them on. If the basis could be permanently retained at home, it would all be well; but if it cannot, better to rest it on something of less intrinsic worth, and less coveted in foreign lands.

The justice of these principles was to a certain extent recognised in the monetary system of Sir R. Peel, because the Bank of England was permitted to issue notes

CHAP. XXXV.

1834.

to the extent of £14,000,000, and the country banks of the whole empire of nearly as much more on securities only, not on bullion. But in this regulation, and still more in the adherence to it in subsequent times, there were involved two capital errors. In the first place, the *whole currency* of the Bank of England was convertible on demand at the Bank into gold, and that of country bankers at their several places of issue into Bank of England notes, without distinguishing between those parts of the currency issued on securities and those on bullion. Thus *the whole currency was made dependent on the retention of gold.* In the second place, supposing the limit of £14,000,000 had been adequate for the public necessities at the time when it was adopted, it became inadequate from the growth of the nation and the increase of mercantile transactions, the first of which had increased fifty per cent, the latter more than doubled, in thirty years after the system was introduced. To suppose that because £14,000,000 was enough at one time, therefore it was always to be enough, is the same error as to suppose that the measure of a boy of eighteen will do for a man of thirty, or the food which feeds an army of forty thousand men will suffice for seventy thousand.

5. Partial but insufficient recognition of these principles in our monetary system.

6. Double set of dangers of a currency based on the retention of gold.

It is the peculiar evil of a system of currency mainly dependent on the retention of gold, that it inevitably tends unduly to foster and inflame speculation when the precious metals are plentiful, and proportionably check and prostrate it when they are withdrawn. When from any external cause, or the exports becoming nearly equal to the imports by the effect of long-continued and general suffering, gold has become plentiful in the coffers of the Bank, and consequently its own issues, and those of all other banks, have become fearless and abundant, prices rise, speculation flourishes, great undertakings are commenced, and general prosperity for a brief season prevails. But in this very prosperity, acting on a system of currency based on the retention of the precious metals, are involved

the seeds of certain and speedy disaster. The whole community, and especially the working classes, having, by the extension of the currency, been placed in a position, for a time, of comparative affluence and prosperity, the consumption of every species of merchandise of course increases in a similar proportion, and much beyond what, from the want of a similar cause, takes place at the same time in foreign states. Thence a great and growing balance of imports over exports arises; and this balance, under the combined influence of free trade and a high state of commercial credit, has of late years sometimes risen to *thirty or forty millions a-year.** This immense balance of course must be chiefly paid in cash, or bills convertible into it, the only universally received medium of exchange among nations. Thence a rapid contraction of the currency to check the dreaded drain on the banks for gold, a serious fall of prices, a stoppage of mercantile discounts, a rise of interest and universal shake to credit, and suspension of enterprises of every sort, agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial. Thus prosperity, under a system of currency mainly dependent on the retention of gold, leads to alternations of prosperity and suffering as inevitably as night succeeds day and day night, and that altogether irrespective of drains of gold from extraneous causes, such as war loans, extensive importations of grain owing to bad harvests, or the like, which necessarily, and still more immediately, lead to a ruinous contraction of the currency, and consequent stoppage of credit, and general suffering.

* Exports and Imports in the undermentioned Years.

Years.	Exports.	Imports.	Balance.
1845	£60,111,081	£85,281,958	£25,170,877
1846	57,786,875	75,953,875	18,266,700
1847	58,849,377	90,921,586	32,072,505
1848	52,849,445	93,547,134	40,657,859
1849	63,596,025	105,874,607	42,278,682

—Porter's *Progress of the Nation*, 3d edit., p. 356.

CHAP. XXXV.

1834.

7. Remedy for these evils.

The way, and the only way, to avoid this is perfectly simple, although such is the combined influence of the *clear appreciation of the subject* by a few interested parties on the one hand, and the benighted ignorance of it by the vast majority of the sufferers under it on the other, that an entire generation required to be rendered bankrupt, or go to their graves, before the subject was generally understood. This is to have TWO CURRENCIES in every commercial community: the one convertible on demand into the precious metals for conducting its foreign transactions; the other not so convertible, to sustain its domestic industry. The latter currency should be open to *expansion* in proportion to the abstraction of the gold, which is the foundation of the first, for it is mainly serviceable in supplying the vacuum occasioned by the periodical abstraction of the former. Without doubt this domestic inconvertible currency must not be issued in too large quantities; care must be taken that it does not turn into assignats, and extinguish capital by lowering the value of the currency in which it may be discharged. But from the abuses of a system no argument can be drawn against its use. Because many drunkards perish by the undue use of ardent spirits, it does not follow that they are to be altogether proscribed in moderate quantities; because the Esquimaux reel about from gorging themselves with wheaten bread, it does not follow that a general abstinence from loaves is to be proclaimed.

8. The rise of interest in a monetary crisis is not owing to want of capital.

The advocates of the present monetary system maintain that the high rate of interest, amounting sometimes to seven and eight per cent, which always ensues on a monetary crisis, is in reality owing not to any deficiency in the circulating medium, but to the supply of capital being at times, from accidental causes, within the demand. Two facts of universal notoriety and vast importance are decisive against this theory. The first is, that in the years 1813 and 1814, at the close of a war of twenty years' duration, and the borrowing of £600,000,000 during its

continuance, loans of little short of £50,000,000 in each year were obtained by Government, the currency of England being £48,000,000, at £4, 12s. per cent.[1] The second is, that in 1825 and 1848, when the interest of money was, during the monetary crises, from eight to ten per cent, it was reduced within a few months to four or five per cent, the capital of the country having been diminished instead of being increased in the interim by the crash—in the first case by the accidental discovery and issuing of £2,000,000 of old notes by the Bank of England; in the second, by a letter from the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer, amounting to a suspension of cash payments. These instances decisively prove that the extremely high rate of interest which always ensues in a monetary crisis, and is attended with effects so distressing, is in no degree owing to any deficiency of capital in proportion to the demand, but *solely* to the monetary laws, which render bankers and money-lenders reluctant to lend from dread of being immediately compelled to exchange the sums in which their loans are issued for gold, which is every day slipping out of their hands.

[1] Hist. of Europe, 1789-1815, c. 84, § 18.

9. Argument of the bullionists in favour of their system.

It is confidently maintained by the gold party, and has been argued with much ability by their acknowledged head, Lord Overstone, that no lasting relief would be experienced by the establishment of a double currency, partly convertible and partly not, because the inevitable effect of the issue of inconvertible paper would immediately be to drive the gold out of the country, and then either the same scarcity of currency which was formerly complained of would still be felt, or the specie would be wholly sent abroad, and the currency would become one issued on securities, or not convertible only. If £5,000,000 of inconvertible notes are issued, it is said £5,000,000 of sovereigns will be driven abroad, and the nation will experience no relief, but merely witness the exchange of a metallic for a paper currency. The only remedy for such a danger, it is alleged, is the establishment of a system

CHAP. XXXV. 1834.

which may compel a contraction of credit and of the currency when the exchanges become adverse, and thus bring back the gold by a diminution of transactions and fall of prices. The answer to this argument, which is so specious, and has been so ably stated that it has carried with it an entire generation, is threefold, and the whole merits of the question are involved in their consideration.

10. Answer to this argument.

In the first place, if the gold can only be retained, when exchanges become adverse, by strangling industry, starving the country, and so lowering the prices of the produce of every species of industry, *the remedy is worse than the disease.* Gold is a very good thing, and necessary for foreign exchanges, but it is not worth purchasing by the ruin of the country. In every one of the great monetary crises which have occurred every five or six years during the last thirty, from a hundred to a hundred and fifty millions sterling have been destroyed. Is the retention of gold worth purchasing at such a price? What is the use of it, if it can only be retained by making the capitalists rich and all other classes poor? In the next place, the experience of Great Britain, during the French war, demonstrates that, by means of an adequate paper currency, not only can calamity be averted, but the highest degree of social prosperity and national glory attained *without any gold;* witness the years 1809 and 1810, when a guinea was selling for 28s. In the third place, the apprehension so strongly felt by the bullion party of the gold leaving the country for any length of time, is entirely chimerical. What makes gold leave the country is its bearing a higher price abroad than at home, and what occasions this is very rarely a redundant paper circulation in the interior, but generally an extraordinary demand abroad, arising either from the necessities of foreign armies, the payment of foreign loans, a great importation of grain arising from deficient harvests, or a large increase of importations over exportations arising from great internal prosperity. When the extraordinary demand for gold arising from any of these causes has

ceased in foreign countries, or the want of it is felt in this, gold will return to this, the centre of wealth and commerce, as certainly as the planets will revolve round the sun.

11. Such a currency must be based on the national security.

To put this domestic currency on a proper footing, it is indispensable that it should be issued by *Government, and Government only,* and on the national security, and that every banker who chooses to deal in notes should not be permitted to usurp the king's prerogative, and issue the current coin of the realm. There is very great danger, under such a system, of a currency getting into circulation which is at once redundant in point of amount, and unsafe in point of security. The currency should be all issued by Government, and Government only, and the nation responsible for its value as it is for the Three per Cents. Nothing would be easier than to establish such a currency, and confine it within the requisite limits. One obvious way of limiting it in point of amount, and giving it adequate efficacy in averting evil, would be to limit it in the ordinary case to half the amount of taxes annually paid by the nation. Another, and a still better, to empower commissioners, for every million of bullion withdrawn from the Bank below a certain standard, say £16,000,000, to issue an additional million of the inconvertible notes, to be drawn in by being taken in payment of taxes without being reissued when the gold comes back. It belongs to practical men to devise the details of such a system; but if honestly set about by men of capacity, nothing would be more easy of accomplishment. And it may safely be affirmed, that if the requisite change is not made, the nation will continue to be visited every four or five years by periods of calamity which will destroy all the fruits of former prosperity,—like the unfortunate culprits who, under the former inhuman system of military law, when sentenced to one thousand or fifteen hundred lashes, were brought out *at successive times to receive their punishment* by instalments as soon as their wounds had been healed in the hospital.

CHAP. XXXV.

1834.

12. Effect of the monetary laws in inducing the prosperity of 1835.

It has been already seen how powerfully the monetary crises of 1825 and 1831 contributed to swell the public discontent and suffering, which at length found vent in the Reform revolution. Not less important were the effects of the opposite set of causes in producing the feverish prosperity of 1835 and 1836, terminating, as a natural consequence, in the long-continued depression from 1837 to 1842. Several causes concurred, in the first of these years, in retaining the gold in the nation, and inducing a high though fleeting degree of social well-being. Four fine seasons in succession had reduced to nothing the importation of wheat, and rendered the country for the chief food of the people self-supporting.* The effect of this, of course, was to stop altogether that drain of the precious metals, the most serious that can set in upon any country, which arises from the necessity of paying for large importations of food in gold or silver, from the disinclination of the raisers of it to take payment in any other form. At the same time, the reduced price of provisions increased the surplus available for other purchases in the hands of the middle and working classes so much as to communicate a fresh and very important impulse both to foreign commerce and domestic manufactures. And all this occurred at the very time when, from the pacification, in part at least, of South America, the supplies of the precious metals from those regions were considerably increased; and when the restored confidence of the nation in the stability of existing things, by the rolling past of the Reform tempest, had renewed,

* Importation of Wheat into Great Britain from 1830 to 1836.

	Quarters.
1830,	1,701,835
1831,	1,491,631
1832,	325,435
1833,	82,346
1834,	64,653
1835,	28,483
1836,	24,826

—Porter's *Progress of the Nation*, 3d edit., p. 140.

after a dreary interval, the taste for comforts and luxuries, and inspired the raisers of them with sufficient trust in the fortunes of the country to undertake their production.

13. Growing prosperity of 1835 and 1836.

The effect of these concurring causes ere long appeared, in the magnitude of the reserve treasure in the possession of the Bank of England, the consequent extension of its paper circulation, and the general rise of prices, and encouragement of speculation among the industrious classes over the whole country. The Funds in the latter part of 1834 rose to 91, and the Four per Cents in March stood at 104—a state of things which enabled the Chancellor of the Exchequer to carry through a bill reducing the interest on the latter stock to 3½ per cent, which was a very considerable saving to the nation, as the stock of that description amounted to £156,000,000. The dissentients were only 969, holding stock to the amount of £4,600,000; but Government, to pay off this sum, adopted the very questionable measure of making payment of that sum out of the "monies, stocks, and exchequer bills held by them *under the Savings Bank Act;*" a step which did not in reality diminish the security of the holders of money in those invaluable establishments, as the stock of those who dissented was placed in the names of the Commissioners in an account entitled "The Funds for the Banks of Savings;" but it had an awkward appearance, and gave rise to various sinister reports as to the security of these establishments, which time has now happily completely dispelled. The trade, navigation, and revenue of the United Kingdom evinced great elasticity towards the close of 1834, and during the whole of 1835 and 1836, insomuch that that period may be reckoned with justice one of the most prosperous which the country had ever known.[1] The revenue, as is always the case, rose in proportion, and for the first time for many years exhibited a flattering and growing increase, bringing out an esti-

[1] Ann. Reg. 1834, 290, 291, 292, App. to Chron.

CHAP. XXXV.

1834.

mated surplus of income above expenditure, in 1835, of £1,815,000.*

14. Joint-stock mania.

The effects of this extraordinary flood of prosperity, the result of the important change made upon the currency laws in 1834, by declaring Bank of England notes a legal tender everywhere but at the Bank of England, already noticed,[1] were very important, and are still felt in various branches of industry and social economy—money being abundant, and the terrors of the bankers of a run upon them for gold allayed by this great change. Advances were liberally made to carry on mercantile undertakings, and both railway and banking speculations exhibited a rapid increase. In the three years ending with 1835, thirty-four joint-stock banks were established; and in 1836 no less than *forty-four* new ones were set up—making in all two hundred joint-stock banks, with six hundred and seventy branches, all founded since the joint-stock system had been established in 1826.† The issues of the country banks increased in a similar proportion: in the year 1836 they rose £1,500,000. Railway speculations underwent a similar increase: the number of bills for establishing new lines augmented from eleven in 1833 to thirty-five in 1836 and forty-two in 1837, and the capital expended in them swelled from

[1] Ante, c. xxxi. § 64.

* Exports and Imports of Great Britain from 1834 to 1836.

Years.	Exports. Declared Value.	Imports. Official Value.	Revenue.	Shipping. Tons.
1834	£41,288,526	£49,362,811	£46,425,263	3,132,168
1835	47,020,658	48,911,542	45,893,369	3,309,724
1836	53,368,572	57,023,847	48,591,180	3,494,372

—Porter's *Progress of the Nation*, pp. 356, 397, 475.

† Circulation of Private Banks.

January 1834, ...	£10,152,104
July 1835, . . .	10,939,801
July 1836, . . .	12,202,196

—Porter's *Progress of the Nation*, 3d edit., p. 432.

£2,312,000 in 1834 to £22,874,000 in 1836.* These four seasons in succession, at the same time, lowered the price of provisions to an unprecedented degree—from 55s. 9d. in 1832, wheat fell to 35s. 9d. in 1835. In a word, the perilous tendency of a circulation based entirely on the retention of gold, was during these years unequivocally evinced in a way directly the reverse of what had hitherto been experienced, but not less fatal; for exchange during those years being favourable, and the export of gold small, paper was issued in abundance, and speculation went on as wildly and extravagantly as it had done ten years before, unchecked by the memory of the terrible catastrophe in which it had then terminated. One class only, though the most important—the agricultural—was severely suffering; the unprecedentedly low price of every kind of rural produce threatened, if it lasted much longer, to involve them in total ruin.[1]

[1] Mart. ii. 328, 329.

15. Burning of the two Houses of Parliament.

Amid this general prosperity, a calamitous event occurred on the 16th October, which filled the inhabitants of London with consternation. At six o'clock in the evening of that day, a fire suddenly broke out near the entrance of the two Houses, occasioned by the imprudent burning of a large quantity of old records, which had overheated the flues which penetrated the building, that frequent cause of conflagration in modern edifices. The flames burnt with such fury, and spread with such rapidity, that all attempts to check them were vain; and the whole efforts of the fire-engines, which on the first alarm were hurried to the spot, were directed to prevent the conflagration spreading to the adjoining structures of Westminster Hall and the Speaker's house. These were with great difficulty preserved from destruction, but both

* Railway Bills passed and Capital authorised.

Years.	Lines.	Authorised Capital.
1834,	14	£2,312,053
1835,	19	4,812,833
1836,	35	22,874,998
1837,	42	13,521,799

—Porter, p. 327.

CHAP. XXXV.

1834. Houses of Parliament, and a great number of the official rooms connected with them, became the prey of the flames, and were utterly destroyed. The Painted Chamber, fraught with so many interesting recollections from the earliest period of the monarchy — the chapel of St Stephen's, which carried the imagination back to the days of our Saxon kings—the splendid tapestry representing the Spanish Armada, were all destroyed. The lovers of the fine arts can hardly regret a devastation which has made room for the splendid structure which now adorns the same spot, and is destined to witness, it is to be hoped for many generations, the meetings of the Reformed House of Commons; but those who are impressed with the reverence for antiquity, will long lament the loss of a structure hallowed by the memories of eight centuries; and there were not awanting those who thought this calamitous event was ominous of the fate of the empire, and that, as the old constitution had perished, it was fitting that the structure which had witnessed its growth should perish with it.

16. The new Cabinet. It was in the midst of this growing prosperity that Sir R. Peel, in obedience to his sovereign's command, assumed the reins of office, and attempted the arduous task of forming an Administration, and conducting the Government in the face of a decided majority in the House of Commons and the urban constituencies. It was at first said by the Liberals that he would not succeed in even forming a Cabinet, and that the King, after his ill-judged attempt to form a new Administration, would be forced to go back to the old one. In this hope, however, they were disappointed, for soon after Sir Robert's return the new Ministry appeared in the Gazette, and Parliament was dissolved by proclamation. The first step of Sir R. Peel was to open a negotiation with Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham, as their secession from the late Administration led to the hope that they might, without a compromise of principle, join the present. But though both these statesmen expressed them-

Dec. 18, 1834. Jan. 1, 1835.

selves in courteous terms towards the new Minister, and declared their readiness to give him a fair trial, they were not prepared, at present at least, to join his Cabinet, from a fear that their motives for so doing would be liable to misconstruction. The consequence was that Sir Robert was thrown back upon the old Tory party exclusively, and a Cabinet was formed, containing such an amount of talent and eminence as would in former days have insured stability, but could hardly be said to promise it in the altered state of the constitution under the Reform Bill.[1] *

[1] Doubleday's Life of Sir R. Peel, ii. 194; Ann. Reg. 1835, 2, 3; Mat. ii. 206.

* Sir R. Peel's Government as finally arranged.

Cabinet.	
First Lord of the Treasury,	Sir R. Peel.
Lord-Chancellor,	Lord Lyndhurst.
President of the Council,	Lord Rosslyn.
Privy Seal,	Lord Wharncliffe.
Secretary, Home Department,	Mr Goulburn.
———, Foreign,	Duke of Wellington.
———, Colonial,	Lord Aberdeen.
First Lord of the Admiralty,	Earl De Grey.
Secretary for Ireland,	Sir H. Hardinge.
President of the Board of Control,	Lord Ellenborough.
President of the Board of Trade, and Master of the Mint,	Mr Baring.
Paymaster of the Forces,	Sir E. Knatchbull.
Secretary-at-War,	Mr Herries.
Master-General of the Ordnance,	Sir G. Murray.
Not in the Cabinet.	
Postmaster-General,	Lord Maryborough.
Lord-Chamberlain,	Lord Jersey.
Lord-Steward,	Lord Wilton.
Master of the Horse,	Duke of Dorset.
Groom of the Stole,	Marquess of Winchester.
Treasurer of the Navy,	Lord Lowther.
First Commissioner, Land Revenue,	Lord Granville Somerset.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,	Mr Wynn.
Attorney-General,	Sir F. Pollock.
Solicitor-General,	Sir W. Follett.
In Ireland.	
Lord-Lieutenant,	Earl of Haddington.
Lord-Chancellor,	Sir E. Sugden.
Commander-in-Chief,	Sir H. Vivian.
Attorney-General,	Mr Pennefather.
Solicitor-General,	Mr Jackson.
In Scotland.	
Lord-Advocate,	Sir W. Rae.
Solicitor-General,	Mr M'Neill.

—*Ann. Reg.*, 1835, p. 181—Appendix to Chron.

CHAP. XXXV.

1835. 17. Sir Robert Peel's address to the electors of Tamworth.

Previous to entering on the labours of office, Sir R. Peel addressed an important letter to the electors of Tamworth, which was in effect a manifesto to the whole middle classes of the empire. It was in the highest degree moderate and conciliatory; disclaimed all intention to interfere with the constitution as established by the Reform Bill, but declared his willingness to reform all real abuses, and listen to all well-founded grounds of complaint. He said: "With regard to the Reform Bill itself, I accept it as *a final and irrevocable settlement of a great constitutional question;* a settlement which no friend to the peace and welfare of the country would attempt to disturb, either by direct or insidious means. I will carry out its intentions, supposing those to imply a careful review of old institutions, undertaken in a friendly spirit, and with a purpose of improvement. I enter upon the arduous duties assigned to me with the deepest sense of the responsibility they involve, with great distrust of my own qualifications for their adequate discharge, but, at the same time, with a resolution to persevere, which nothing could inspire but the strong impulse of public duty, the consciousness of upright motives, and the firm belief that the people of this country will so far maintain the prerogative of the King, as to give to the Ministers of his choice, not implicit confidence, but a fair trial." There can be no doubt, from his subsequent conduct, that Sir R. Peel was perfectly sincere in these observations, and as little that he was thoroughly wise.[1] The constitution having, after a violent struggle well-nigh attended with fatal consequences, been settled on a new basis, nothing could have been more perilous and injudicious than to attempt to alter it, either directly or indirectly. The only wisdom was to let it get its full swing, and work out its natural and inevitable results. "The people," says Harrington, "cannot see, *but they can feel.*"

[1] Sir R. Peel's Address, Ann. Reg. 1835, 4, 5.

It was seriously apprehended by many persons who knew the strength of the reform passion which had got possession of the country, that the restoration to power of a Tory Government would lead to serious disturbances, and those who were aware of the length which matters had gone before the Reform Bill was passed, were not a little fearful that the displaced Ministry might attempt to regain office, as they had carried the bill, by actual force. These apprehensions, however, proved happily fallacious, and the event showed that the change which had been made, by giving the middle class in towns, where most danger was to be apprehended, the command of the country, had greatly lessened the risk of popular insurrection. The country remained perfectly quiet when the change was announced; conscious of their strength, the Liberals continued peaceable. The usual weapons of party warfare, indeed, were employed unsparingly, though without generally rousing the people to any dangerous excesses. The Liberals loudly declaimed that the reign of the boroughmongers and the Peers was about to return; that the Reform Bill, if not expressly abrogated, would be virtually repealed; and that the newborn liberties of the people would be sacrificed at the shrine of a rapacious oligarchy, to whose restoration to power this was the first step. One leading journal said, evidently on the information of a Cabinet Minister, "The Queen has done it all;" an assertion soon found to have been erroneous, as the cause of it was the resentment felt by his Majesty at the coercions put on him at the passing of the Reform Bill. The few journals who supported the Tory side answered, that these imputations were entirely unfounded; that no infringement on the Reform Bill, either express or implied, was intended, and that the manifesto of Sir Robert Peel proved that more real reformation of abuses was to be expected from his Administration, than from that which the public indignation had so

18. Peaceable manner in which the change was received in the country.

CHAP. XXXV.

1835.

recently chased from power. These apprehensions were natural on both sides, and such as might have been expected under the circumstances; but had the real views of Sir R. Peel been known, his advent to power would have been hailed by the Liberals with more joy than that of any of their chiefs who carried the Reform Bill.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1835, 5, 6, 7, 57; Doubleday, ii. 196, 197; Mart. ii. 209, 210.

19. Result of the elections in England.

The elections took place in the middle of January, and it was from them that the Liberals first obtained decisive evidence that a great difference of opinion as to their qualifications to carry on the Government had arisen in the country. In the metropolis, indeed, in which, according to custom, the first trials of strength occurred, the Conservatives were eminently unsuccessful. Every one of the twenty members were returned in the Reform interest. But it was far otherwise in the counties, and many of the great towns of England: in them a large intermixture of Tories was returned. Halifax, York, and Leeds returned each one Conservative candidate—in the last he was at the head of the poll. Bristol returned two Conservative members, as did Newcastle, Exeter, Hull, and Warrington. Liverpool returned Lord Sandon, a moderate Tory, as one of its members, and though Sir Howard Douglas, the other candidate on that interest, was defeated by Mr Ewart, a Liberal, he polled seven hundred more votes than he had done on the last occasion. In Lancashire and Hampshire both the Liberal candidates were defeated by the Conservative. On the other hand, Manchester, Birmingham, Bolton, Sheffield, Preston, and most of the manufacturing towns, returned Liberals. In a word, contrary to general expectation, and to the no small dismay of the Whigs, who had anticipated a perpetual lease of power from the Reform Bill,[2] a small majority of the five hundred English members was returned in the Tory interest—an astonishing fact, considering how lately the country had been

[2] Ann. Reg. 1835, 14, 15.

shaken to its foundations by the Reform tempest, and eminently instructive as to the strength of the religious, loyal, and orderly feelings which characterised a large portion of the English people.

20. Returns in Scotland.

It was otherwise in Ireland and Scotland, however, where the Reform Bill had worked an entire revolution, and the class in whom political power had been formerly too exclusively vested was entirely stripped of it. The whole burghs of Scotland, twenty in number, returned Liberal members: in the counties, five were gained by the Tories where they had formerly failed, and three by the Whigs where on the last occasion they had been defeated; and Glasgow, which had formerly returned a Conservative (Mr J. Ewing) and a Liberal, now returned two Liberals. The electors of Roxburghshire, who had given a signal proof of their fitness to exercise the electoral rights by hissing the dying Sir Walter Scott when he ventured to express an opinion adverse to them on the Reform Bill, again gave a striking proof of their incapability to bear its excitements on occasion of this election. Serious disturbances took place at Jedburgh, the county town, when Lord John Scott, the Tory candidate, made his appearance, and numbers of the electors were struck by the mob. But this was nothing compared with what occurred at Hawick, one of the polling places for the same county. From the very first, symptoms of very serious riot manifested themselves in that town; and in spite of the strenuous efforts of the sheriff of the county and a numerous body of justices of peace, and a large body of constables, who were in attendance, the most dreadful acts of violence took place. The voters who came up to vote for Lord John were spit upon, pelted with stones, and severely struck, and in some cases thrown into the Slitridge stream which runs through the town, and subjected to the most shocking indignities, which the judges who afterwards

CHAP. XXXV. 1835.

tried the case of the rioters declared "*to be worse than death itself.*" The Riot Act was twice read by the sheriff, and tranquillity was only restored, on the second night of the rioting, by the entry of a troop of dragoons whom the lord-lieutenant summoned up from Edinburgh. The ringleaders in the disturbances were afterwards tried in the Justiciary Court and severely punished, by eighteen months' and two years' imprisonment.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1835, 6, 7.

21. Irish elections, and junction of Liberals and Catholics there.

The Irish elections, however, turned the scale against the new Ministry. It soon appeared that a compact, express or implied, had been made between the English Liberals and the Irish Catholics, for the purpose of subverting the Government of Sir R. Peel, and that the whole influence of the Romish priesthood, with O'Connell at their head, was to be exerted by the most unscrupulous means against them. The agitators went round as rapidly as a wheel of well-drilled troops on a review. Nothing more was heard of the "base, bloody, and brutal Whigs." On the hustings at Dublin, Mr O'Connell said: "I am still for the repeal—sink or swim, live or die, I am for the repeal. And here I proclaim, by everything sacred, to those who are most opposed to me, that *I am ready to concur with them*, and make with them the transition not only free from danger, but perfectly safe." Lists of the candidates to be supported by the coalition of Liberals and Catholics were published, and they were everywhere supported, and their opponents resisted, by the whole strength, physical and spiritual, of that formidable coalition. The voters were collected in their chapels by the priests, and led forth to the poll under threats of being refused all the rites, and visited with all the punishments, of the Church, if they failed to vote for the O'Connell candidate. Every one who voted for the opposite candidate was threatened with instant death. The Knight of Kerry, having started as candidate for the county of the same

name, which he had represented for thirty years in Parliament, was immediately assailed, in the most violent manner, by O'Connell, though he had spent his life in restraining the impetuosity of the Orangemen. "Every one," said he, "who dares to vote for the Knight of Kerry, shall have a death's-head and cross bones painted on his door." Though supported by nearly all the property, intelligence, and respectability of the county, he was defeated by the priesthood. Of a candidate for New Ross, who refused to enlist under his banner, O'Connell said, "Whoever shall support him, his shop shall be deserted—no man shall pass his threshold—let no man deal with him—let no woman speak to him—let the children laugh him to scorn." Mr Sheil, another Catholic leader, said, "If any Catholic should vote for him (the Protestant candidate), I will supplicate the throne of the Almighty that he may be shown mercy in the next world, but *I ask no mercy for him in this.*" O'Connell's principles were repeal of the Union, triennial parliaments, universal suffrage, and vote by ballot; yet he received the votes of the family and retainers of the late Lord-Chancellor of Ireland. The coalition was everywhere conspicuous, and with such success were its efforts carried out by the well-drilled and organised priesthood, that a decided preponderance of the members returned was in the Liberal interest; and no room remained for doubt that by their means the majority in Great Britain for Sir R. Peel would be overcome, and a majority, though a very slight one, obtained for the Liberals in the united Parliament.[1] [1] Ann. Reg. 1835, 15, 16; Mart. ii. 209.

22. Division on the choice of a Speaker. Feb. 19, 1835.

"Parliament met on the 19th February, and the first thing of course done was to proceed to the election of a Speaker. Upon this question, by common consent, the parties resolved to make trial of their strength. Lord Francis Egerton, one of the members for Lancashire, moved that Sir C. Manners Sutton, who for eighteen

CHAP. XXXV. 1835.

years had filled the chair with the unanimous approbation of all parties in the house, should be re-elected; and the motion was seconded by Sir C. Burrell. On the other hand, Mr Denison, one of the members for Surrey, proposed Mr Abercromby, a gentleman of talents at the bar, and strongly supported by the Devonshire family, of which he had long been the confidential adviser; and he was seconded by Mr Orde. The division was looked to with great anxiety by all parties, as it was well understood that it would be decisive of the fate of the Ministry by testing the comparative strength of parties in the new house. After a long debate, in which, as usual on such occasions, every topic was touched on except that really in the minds of the speakers, the division took place in the fullest house on record, there being 626 members present. It showed a majority of *ten votes* for Mr Abercromby, the numbers being 316 to 306. This division was by far the most important of any which had taken place since the passing of the Reform Bill, and it brought out in clear colours the real and lasting effects of that measure. Of the English members, a great majority of the county representatives voted for Sir Charles Sutton, and a majority of 23 supported him, including the borough members; and of the Scotch, 31 voted for Mr Abercromby, and 18 for the late Speaker, still leaving a majority of 10 for Sir C. Sutton. But the Irish members at once cast the balance the other way; for 61 voted for Mr Abercromby, and only 41 for Sir C. Sutton, leaving the latter, upon the whole, in a minority of ten votes. Two things were evident from this memorable division, in which the future of England for the next half-century was clearly foreshadowed. The first was, that the Ministry was entirely, on party questions, at the mercy of the Irish Catholic members;[1] the second, that the county members of the whole empire were *outvoted by the borough, in the proportion of* 35 *to* 20, and

[1] Parl. Deb. xxvi. 1; Ann. Reg. 1835, 35.

1835.

that a large majority of the former had declared for the Conservative side.*

23. Division on the Address. Feb. 24, 1835.

It was at first thought that Sir R. Peel would resign on this defeat; but being deeply impressed with the responsibility of his situation, and the duty which he owed to the Sovereign who had appealed to him in his distress, he resolved to persevere, and not to retire till, on some vital question of ministerial policy, a majority of the House of Commons declared against him. On the 24th February, the House met for the despatch of business, and the Speech from the Throne, after lamenting the destruction of the two Houses by fire, congratulated the country on the commercial prosperity which was universal, but "deeply laments that the agricultural interest continues in a state of deep depression. I recommend to your consideration whether it may not be in your power, after providing for the exigencies of the public service, and consistently with the steadfast maintenance of the public credit, to devise a method for mitigating the pressure of those local charges which bear heavily on the owners and occupiers of land, and for distributing the burden of them more equally over other descriptions of property." The Address, which was moved in the Commons by Lord Sandon, was as usual an echo of the Speech; but when it was brought forward, an amendment was moved by Lord Morpeth, which obviously put the very existence of the

* The following is an analysis of this important division:—

		County Members.	Borough Members.	Total.
England,	Abercromby	53	171	224
	Sutton	88	159	247
Scotland,	Abercromby	11	20	31
	Sutton	18	0	18
Ireland,	Abercromby	31	30	61
	Sutton	30	11	41
		231	391	622

—*Ann. Reg.* 1835, p. 3; *Parl. Deb.* xxvii.

The candidates voted for each other, and the four tellers are not included in the above enumeration.

CHAP. XXXV. 1835.

Ministry at stake. It was cautiously worded, and contained no declaration of want of confidence in the Ministry; but expressed a hope that municipal corporations would be placed under vigilant popular control, that the undoubted grievances of Dissenters would be considered, abuses in the Church of England and Ireland removed, and lamented the dissolution of Parliament as an unnecessary measure, by which the progress of these and other reforms had been interrupted and endangered. This amendment, which foreshadowed the future policy of the Opposition, and contained a direct censure upon Ministers for dissolving Parliament, gave rise to a long and animated debate, which lasted four nights, but terminated in another triumph of the Liberals, the numbers being 309 to 302, leaving a majority of SEVEN against the Ministers. This majority, like the former, was entirely made up of the Irish Roman Catholic votes; for of the English members who voted, a majority of 32 was in favour of Sir R. Peel; of the English and Scotch taken together, the majority was still 16; but the balance was cast the other way by the Irish, for there were 59 against him, and only 36 in his favour. Such was the gratitude which the Romish clergy and members evinced to the man who had endangered his own political character to open to them the doors of Parliament![1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1835, 84-97; Parl. Deb. xxvi.

24. King's reception of the Address as amended.

When the Address, thus amended, was presented to the King, his majesty replied: "I learn with regret that you do not concur with me in the policy of the appeal which I have recently made to the sense of my people. I never have exercised, and never will exercise, any of the prerogatives which I hold, except for the single purpose of promoting the great end for which they are intrusted to me—the public good;[2] and I confidently trust that no measure conducive to the general interests will be endangered or interrupted in its progress by the opportunity I have afforded to my faithful and loyal subjects of express-

[2] Ann. Reg. 1835, 101, 201.

ing their opinion through the choice of their representatives in Parliament."

1835.

Notwithstanding this second defeat, the Prime Minister still held on, alleging that no vital point involving the general policy of Government had yet come on for discussion. The Opposition leaders were much chagrined by this unexpected obstacle to their hopes, and very warm discussions took place in Parliament on reports which were eagerly circulated and credulously believed, in regard to alleged unconstitutional measures contemplated by the Government. On 2d March, Lord John Russell noticed two of these reports in Parliament: the first being, that Parliament was to be again dissolved; the second, that if this became necessary before the Mutiny Act was passed, the army would be kept up in the mean time on the sole responsibility of Ministers; and at the same time he gave notice that he intended to bring forward the Irish Appropriation question, and that of Municipal Reform. Sir R. Peel's answer was frank and explicit. He said that he had never contemplated a dissolution of Parliament, or a keeping up of the army by the prerogative alone; that he was anxious that the Irish Commission should prosecute its labours, and that Government would bring in a bill on the subject, adhering strictly to the principle that ecclesiastical property should be reserved for ecclesiastical purposes; and that they would be prepared to remedy all real abuses in corporations when the report of the commissioners appointed for their investigation was received. These were mere skirmishes, which were the precursors of the battle; but they indicated not obscurely where the weight of the attack was to be directed.[1]

25. Exasperation of the Whigs at Sir R. Peel not resigning.

March 2.

[1] Parl. Deb. xxvi. 419, 471-473.

The extreme distress of the agricultural interest in this year, when wheat fell to 39s. 5d. the quarter, induced the Marquess of Chandos to bring forward a motion for the repeal of the malt-tax; a project which has always been a favourite one with the agricultural interest, though

26. Motion for repeal of the malt-tax lost.

CHAP. XXXV.

1835.

March 7.

it may well be doubted whether, even if entirely conceded, it would yield the benefit to them which they seem to suppose. Sir R. Peel resisted the proposal, upon the ground that, however desirable it might be to give relief to the agricultural interest in that way, the state of the revenue would not admit of it. Lord Althorpe had stated the probable surplus, after taking into view the reduced taxation this year, at £250,000 ; the malt-tax proposed to be repealed brought in £4,812,000 last year. In other words, the reduction would leave the exchequer in a deficiency of £4,562,000. This statement was decisive, for every one saw that the inevitable result of going into the repeal would be the dire alternative of a property-tax. Sir R. Peel's words were : "My prophecy is, that if you repeal this tax, you will make an income-tax necessary ; to that, be assured, you must come at last, if you repeal the malt-tax. You will lay your taxes on articles of general consumption, on tobacco, on spirits, on wine, and you will meet with such a storm that will make you hastily recede from your first advances towards a substitute. To a property-tax, then, you must come ; and I congratulate you, gentlemen of the landed interest, on finding yourselves relieved from the pressure of the malt-tax, and falling on a good comfortable property-tax, with a proposal, probably, for a graduated scale. And you who represent the heavy land of this country—the clay soils, the soils unfit for barley—I felicitate you on the prospect which lies before you. If you think that the substitute will be advantageous to your interests, be it so ; but do not, when hereafter you discover your mistake, do not lay the blame upon those who offered you a timely warning, and cautioned you against exchanging the light pressure of a malt duty FOR THE SCOURGE OF A PROPERTY-TAX."[1] The Liberals and Ministerialists accordingly joined to resist the motion, which was thrown out by a majority of 158 ; the numbers being 350 to 192. This was very

[1] Ann. Reg. 1836, 116, 128; Parl. Deb. xxvi. 738, 776, 834.

nearly in the proportion of the borough to the county members in the whole house.

Sir R. Peel stated a very remarkable thing, in the course of this debate, in regard to the diminished consumption of beer in the country, compared with what it had been a century before. "In the year 1722," said he, "the population of the country (England) amounted to about 6,000,000, and the beer consumed, as stated in the returns, was nearly the same, being about 6,000,000 barrels; so that *a barrel of beer was consumed by each person.* In 1833 the population amounted to 14,000,000, and yet the annual consumption for the last three years preceding the repeal of the Beer Act was only 8,200,000 barrels, being little more than half a barrel to each person. This great diminution is to be ascribed chiefly to the increased consumption of other articles, especially tea, spirits, and coffee. The first has increased, since 1722, from 370,000 lb., or an ounce to each person, to 31,829,000 lb., or $2\frac{1}{4}$ lb. to each person: the second, from 3,000,000 gallons, or half a gallon to each, in 1722, to 12,332,000, or nearly a whole gallon, in 1833: the third from 262,000 lb. in 1722, or $\frac{3}{4}$ of an ounce to each person, to 20,691,000 lb., or $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. to each person." These figures, which may be entirely relied on, coming from such a quarter, are very remarkable, and go far to account for the great diminution in the consumption of beer, by indicating a change in the national tastes. When it is recollected, however, how strong is the general predilection of the working classes for beer, and how necessary it is to recruit the strength of those who are worn out by incessant toil, it is evident that it does not explain it altogether; and that much was, at the same time, owing to the fall of wages in all classes, especially the agricultural, which had followed the contraction of the currency in 1819. And that it was this contraction, joined to the fact of three fine har-

27. Great diminution in the consumption of beer.

CHAP. XXXV.

1835.

vests having been reaped in succession, which was the real cause of the depressed price of agricultural produce, and not the malt-tax, is proved by the fact, also mentioned by Sir R. Peel, that the price of barley, heavily taxed, was then higher in reference to that of wheat than it had ever been known before—a fact which decisively demonstrated that the fall was owing to some extraneous cause common to both.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxvi. 762-766; Ann. Reg. 116, 117.

28. Debate on Lord Londonderry's appointment as ambassador at St Petersburg.

A striking proof was soon afforded of the strength and blindness of the spirit of party which had now got possession of the legislature, in the opposition made to the appointment of the Marquess of Londonderry to the situation of ambassador at St Petersburg, which, though not as yet formally made out, had been officially announced by Government. This was strongly objected to by Mr Sheil and Mr Cutlar Fergusson in the House of Commons, mainly upon the ground that he had said the Poles were rebellious subjects of Russia, and that having ourselves violated the treaty of Vienna by partitioning the kingdom of the Netherlands, we had no right to complain of the Emperor of Russia having done the same by depriving the Poles of the constitution provided for them by the same treaty. Sir R. Peel made a feeble defence, resting chiefly on the well-known military and diplomatic services of the gallant Marquess, and the danger of the House of Commons interfering in one of the most important parts of the King's prerogative, the choice of ambassadors. Lord Stanley expressed opinions similar to the mover, adding a hope that Ministers would even at the eleventh hour cancel the appointment. As the appointment had not been made out, the motion was withdrawn; but as soon as the Marquess read the debate in the papers of the following day, he, with his usual disinterested manliness, relieved the Government of all embarrassment on the subject by resigning the appointment.[2]

[2] Ann. Reg. 1835, 128-133; Parl. Deb. xxvi. 939, 986.

The Marquess of Londonderry said, in announcing this in the House of Peers: "Having but one object, and that

CHAP. XXXV. 1835.

is to serve the King honestly, and to the best of my ability, were I to depart from this country, after what has passed in the House of Commons, I should feel myself, as a representative of his Majesty, placed in a new, false, and improper position. My efficiency would be impaired, and it would be impossible for me to fill the office to which I have been called with proper dignity or effect. Upon these grounds I have now to announce that no consideration will induce me to accept the office which his Majesty has been graciously pleased to confer upon me." The Duke of Wellington said: "*I recommended* that my noble friend should be appointed ambassador at St Petersburg; and I did so, founding on my knowledge of my noble friend for many years past, on the great and important military services, and on the fitness he has proved himself possessed of for diplomatic duties in the various offices he has filled for many years, particularly at the Court of Vienna, from which he returned with the strongest marks of the approbation of the Secretary of State. Being a military officer of high rank in this country, and of high reputation in the Russian army, he was peculiarly fitted for that employment." This was said with the Duke of Wellington's usual intrepidity and manliness of character, and a soldier could not have said less of an officer who had bled with the heroic Russian Guard on the field of Culm, and, by his ceaseless efforts to bring up Bernadotte and the Swedes, had mainly contributed to the victory of Leipsic.[1] But he might have added, that, of all men in existence, he was the one whom the friends of Poland should *least* have objected to for such an appointment; for he was the representative and inheritor of the policy of the statesman who had, by his single efforts, preserved a remnant of Polish nationality at the Congress of Vienna, when deserted by all the world;[2] and who, while the Liberals of Europe had given them nothing but empty words tending to insurrection and wretchedness, had conferred upon

29. Lord Londonderry's chivalrous declinature of the office.

[1] Hist. of Europe, c. lxxxi. § 48.

[2] Parl. Deb. xxvi. 1004-1007; Ann. Reg. 1835, 133, 134.

CHAP. XXXV. 1835.

them substantial deeds, the springs of social prosperity, and won for them a constitution which had conferred a period of felicity unparalleled in the long annals of Sarmatian suffering.

29. Sir Robert Peel's remedial measures.

On the 17th March, Sir R. Peel introduced a bill to relieve Dissenters from the hardship under which they alleged they laboured, of being obliged to celebrate their marriages according to the form of the Church of England; and to effect this by proposing two ceremonies, one a civil and the other a religious ceremony, and to leave the last to be celebrated according to the forms of the church to which the parties belonged. The Dissenters approved of this bill, but it fell to the ground in consequence of the change of Ministry which so soon after ensued, and the matter was settled in the next session by an act passed under the succeeding Government. Sir Robert introduced a measure for the commutation of tithes, calculated to facilitate that most desirable object. All the committees of the preceding year were reappointed, which had for their object the removal of abuses of any kind. Several remedial measures were also brought forward; in particular, one was introduced for the better discipline of the Church of England, which proposed the equalisation of certain great church incomes, and the creation of two new bishoprics, those of Ripon and Manchester. Ministers were defeated on a motion for an address to the King, praying him to grant a charter to the University of London, authorising them to give degrees, by a majority of 246 to 136. But notwithstanding this check, which was not considered to be on a party question, the Administration, and especially the Premier, were rapidly rising in public estimation, insomuch that Sir R. Peel challenged the Opposition to bring forward a distinct motion of want of confidence, which Lord John Russell declined.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxvii. 212, 279, 301; Ann. Reg. 1835, 137, 156-158.

The skilful leader of the Whigs knew well the reasons he had for declining this challenge: he was preparing a

decisive struggle on much more favourable ground—that of the Irish Church question. That establishment presented many salient points open to attack, in consequence of the very principle on which it was rooted. That principle was that of a MISSIONARY CHURCH. It was never based on the principle of being called for by the present wants of the population; what it looked to was their *future* spiritual necessities. It was founded on the same reasons which prompt the building of churches in a densely-peopled locality, the running of roads through an uncultivated district, of drains through a desert morass. The principle was philanthropic, often in its application wise; but it proceeded on one postulate, which, unfortunately, was here awanting, viz., that the people *will embrace the faith* intended for them. This was so far from having hitherto been the case, that the reverse was the fact. Either from the natural disinclination of the excitable Celtic population for any creed which did not appeal to the imagination, the senses, or the fears of the people, or from the Protestant faith being not adapted to a race of men in their infant state of civilisation, not only had the Church of England made little progress in the making of proselytes, but the Romish Church was daily encroaching on its domain. Over the whole country the Catholics were then to the Protestants as four, in some parts of it as twenty, to one. Any measure, therefore, which went to correct this great inequality between the possessors of church property and the members of their flocks, was sure to enlist in its support not only the whole Irish members returned in the Catholic interest, who were upwards of forty, but the greater part of that still more numerous body in Great Britain, who looked upon the comparative number of the members of different religious persuasions as the only just and solid ground for the distribution of ecclesiastical property.

The Whigs attack Government on the Irish Church question.

The decisive question came on on the 30th March.

CHAP. XXXV.

1835.

32. Lord John Russell's motion regarding the Irish Church. March 30.

On the evening of that day, Lord John Russell moved "that the house do resolve itself into a committee of the whole house, to consider the temporalities of the Church of Ireland, with the view of applying any surplus of the revenues not required for the spiritual care of its members to the general education of all classes of the people, without distinction of religious persuasion." This motion was most skilfully devised by the able leader of the Opposition for the object in view. It merely assumed indirectly, without expressing it, a power in the legislature to deal with Irish Church property; a principle which he knew Sir R. Peel could not concede, but which, nevertheless, would command the support of all the parties, and sections of parties, which might be expected to coalesce against his Administration. The Irish Catholics, ascertained by experience to hold the balance in the House of Commons in their hands, were sure to give it their unanimous and zealous support; the Dissenters would join their ranks from hostility to the common enemy, the Church of England; the Radicals, from enmity to any government, and a desire to get in the point of the revolutionary wedge into the weakest part of our national institutions. Thus, from different motives, all classes of the Opposition might be expected to join in support of this motion, and the great problem which ambition is ever ready to solve in representative states was solved, viz., to find a question upon which parties the most at variance can unite without compromising their own consistency.[1]

[1] Doubleday's Life of Peel, ii. 218; Ann. Reg. 1835, 172.

33. Argument in favour of the motion.

On the part of the motion, it was urged by Lord John Russell, Mr Sheil, and Lord Howick: "Fully admitting that an establishment tends to promote religion, to maintain good order, and that it is agreeable to a majority of the people in this part of the empire, it is yet apparent that it can deserve this high character only so long as it really fulfils these objects. 'The authority of a church,' says Paley, 'is founded upon its utility; and whenever

upon this principle we deliberate concerning the form, propriety, or comparative excellency of different establishments, the single view under which we ought to consider them, is the preservation and communication of religious knowledge. Every other idea, and every other end, which have been mixed up with this, as the making the Church an engine or even ally of the State, converting it into the means of strengthening or diffusing influence, or regarding it as a support of regal in opposition to popular forms of government, have served only to debase the institution, and to introduce into it numerous corruptions and abuses.' This being the avowed object of ecclesiastical establishments, how far has the Church of Ireland come up to that standard? It is immensely rich: what use does it make of its riches? In the beginning of the last century its revenues were under £110,000 a-year; they are now £791,721, or in round numbers £800,000. While this enormous increase has been taking place, has there been a corresponding augmentation in the number of conversions to the Protestant faith, or has the activity and zeal of the clergy been such as to warrant the continuance of this large revenue? So far from this being the case, the fact has been in many instances just the reverse: the established clergy have considered themselves as a great political body rather than a set of religious teachers, and in consequence the number of Protestants, so far from having increased with the growth of the Establishment, has diminished.

34. Continued.

"In the county of Kilkenny, in 1731, there were 1055 Protestants; now there are only 945. In Armagh, at the same period, the Protestants were 3 to 1; now they are 1 to 3. In Kerry the proportion of Catholics is still greater. The whole Protestants of Ireland do not, in all probability, exceed 750,000, of whom 400,000 are in the single province of Ulster. In nine dioceses, out of a population of 2,667,558 souls there are only 335,106 Protestants; while there are 1,732,452 Catholics—being

CHAP. XXXV. 1835.

in the proportion of above 5 to 1. It is then clear, that while in some parts of Ireland the members of the Established Church are sufficiently numerous to require a considerable number of beneficed clergymen, in other parts they form so small a proportion that it is neither necessary nor right to maintain so large an establishment. At present the £800,000 a-year, which forms the income of the Irish Church, is expended entirely for the benefit of perhaps an equal number of the people, while the remaining seven millions, equally burdened by, derive no benefit whatever from it.

35. Continued.

"This state of things is so monstrous, that it inevitably, and as a matter of necessity, led to a general combination against the payment of tithes; and this, in its turn, induced another set of evils, hardly less formidable than those from which it originated. No one can justify that combination; all must deplore it; but it was inevitable; and what we have to consider is, how its continuance or recurrence is best to be prevented. That resistance has become so general and inveterate, that all the efforts, whether of the clergy or the government collectors, have been unable to overcome it. Thus the Establishment has not merely failed to diffuse spiritual doctrine and religious consolation among the great mass of the populace, but it has done just the reverse. It has brought the clergy into continual collision with the people, which has led to scenes of civil strife and bloodshed, and brought about a state of things utterly irreconcilable with the true ends of all church establishment, religious instruction and spiritual consolation. It has become painfully evident that these great and paramount objects can never be aided, or even attained, by limiting the religious instruction of the people of Ireland, as it has hitherto been, and applying the revenues of the Irish Church to maintaining the doctrines of the Establishment, and to no other purpose whatever.

"This being so, it is evident there must be a reform;

and that reform should consist in adapting the Establishment to the wants of those who belonged to it, not in making unnecessary additions. If this principle is adopted by the house, it cannot do otherwise than make a great reduction in the ecclesiastical establishment of Ireland. Whatever remains after that reduction, ought to be applied to some object by which the moral and religious instruction of the people of Ireland may be advanced, and by which they may be led to believe that the funds which were nominally raised were really applied for their benefit. The use to which the surplus is proposed is general education, according to the system adopted by the National Board in Ireland, by which individuals of all persuasions can receive religious and moral instruction, and be brought up in harmony together. From the earliest times this is what it has been the earnest wish of this house, as well as of all the real friends of Ireland, to accomplish. This was the course which the Commission of General Education, appointed in 1816, consisting of the Archbishop of Armagh, Mr Grattan, and Mr Edgeworth, recommended. The question is not whether the people of Ireland should be Catholics or not, but whether or not they should receive the elements of moral and religious instruction. Since the establishment of the National Board of Education in Ireland, introduced by Lord Stanley when Secretary for Ireland, there has been the most perfect harmony of feeling; and wherever schools have been established on that principle, they have been productive of the most beneficial results.

36. Continued.

"It is objected to the principle of this plan that church property cannot be applied to any purposes not strictly ecclesiastical, any more than private property can be taken away from its owner. But is there any analogy between private property and that vested in the bishops, deans and chapters, and clergy of Ireland? The very acts of this Parliament prove the reverse. A bill had been passed which struck off ten of the bishoprics of

37. Concluded.

CHAP. XXXV. 1835.

Ireland, and appropriated their revenues to those next in order—the deans and chapters. But supposing there was enough for them, and still a surplus, what then? It was to be applied to rectors' churches and glebe-houses. But if a surplus still remained after all these objects had been accomplished, how could it be maintained that it was not to be applied in the way most generally beneficial, in promoting that which is the foundation on which all religion and morality must be built—that is, general education? In so applying any surplus funds which may be at your disposal, you are not diverting it from its religious destination; you are, on the contrary, applying it to the most important of all religious objects—the widening the entrance by which all religious knowledge is to be let in. You are applying your resources to broadening the foundations upon which alone an extended superstructure can be reared. It is no answer to this to say, that the land which pays tithe to Protestants is to that in the hands of Catholics as fifteen to one. That would be a serious argument if the Established Church existed only for the rich; but it is nugatory when it is recollected that every establishment professes to be for the whole, and especially the poorest classes of the community."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxvii. 362, 390; Ann. Reg. 1835, 172-177.

38. Answer of the Ministry.

On the other hand, it was maintained by Sir R. Peel, Lord Stanley, and Sir James Graham: "The account given of the revenue of the Irish Church is greatly exaggerated: so far from amounting to £800,000 a-year, it does not exceed £620,000; and even on that sum a charge of £70,000 a-year, being that of vestry cess, has been recently laid, which was formerly paid by the land. A tax, exclusively borne by the Church, of from three to fifteen per cent, has been laid on all livings; and that Act enacted, that in all livings in which service had not been performed from 1830 to 1833, when a vacancy occurred there should be no reappointment, and the revenues of that living, after paying a curate, should be destined to other parishes differently situated, but for purposes

strictly Protestant. Here, then, is a provision already made for the progressive diminution or extinction of the Episcopal Church in those situations where it is not called for, and can be of no utility. Whence, then, the anxiety to take away a surplus which, in all probability, will not exceed £100,000 a-year, from a Church already subjected to such heavy and exclusive burdens? It is not pretended that the object of this appropriation is to apply the income seized to the payment of the national debt, or that it is justified by any state necessity. In truth, the whole thing is done, as the lawyers say, *in emulationem vicini*. It is brought forward, not because the State is poor, but because the Church is rich; not that the people may gain, but that the Church may lose its wealth.

39. Continued.

"Such a doctrine as this completely breaks down the great principle which is at the foundation of all property, and which it has ever been the object of good government to maintain inviolate; a doctrine which, if once admitted, will bring any state from the condition of the highest civilisation to that of utter barbarism. If the appropriation clause, as now shaped, once passes into law, not only will the Protestant cease to be the established religion of Ireland, but it will be fatal to the Church Establishment in this island also. It was to avoid this very danger that the Irish legislature had stipulated in the Articles of the Union for the safety of the Protestant Church; and, without going the length of contending that those Articles are like the laws of the Medes and Persians which cannot be altered, yet it is evident they should not be infringed upon without evident and pressing necessity; and if there is any one interest which more than another should be treated with tenderness, it is that of a church being that of a small minority in the country, and therefore beset with dangers and surrounded by enemies.

"Is the proposed measure likely to pacify Ireland, or heal any of the divisions of that unhappy country? Can

CHAP. XXXV.

1835. 40. Continued.

anything exceed the absurdity of supposing that resistance to paying tithe to a Protestant church will be removed by applying a small fraction of its income to a different purpose? Suppose the incumbents removed from one-fourth of the parishes in Ireland, and their revenues applied to the national schools—will that alleviate the discontent in the remaining three-fourths, where the incumbent still resides, where service is still performed, and tithes are still levied? Will it not rather increase the agitation by encouraging the hope that, by prolonging it, the stripping of the Church, now partial only, will be rendered universal? If peace is the object of this measure, its success is hopeless; it will only prove an additional firebrand of war. This is the object which has hitherto been always held out as inducement to go into the measures urged upon us by the Roman Catholics: peace—peace, is the universal cry. And now it is not disguised that there is no peace, and that this is the first of a set of measures avowedly intended to annihilate the Protestant Establishment. What said Dr M'Hale, one of the ablest of the Roman Catholic bishops, in 1833, after he was in the full enjoyment of his civil rights? 'After all the evils which have fallen on this devoted land, it is a consolation to reflect that the legislative axe is at last laid to the root of the Establishment. The pruners of our ecclesiastical establishments have not read the Roman history in vain, when the two overshadowing plants, which spread their narcotic and poisonous influence all around them, have been laid low. This is but the prelude to a further and still more enlarged process of extinction. By every reform abuses will be removed, until, it is to be hoped, *not a single vestige of that mighty nuisance will remain.*'

41. Continued.

"Mr O'Connell's language, to do him justice, has been equally explicit. No farther back than October 1834, he said: 'It is quite true that I demanded but a partial reduction—it was three-fifths of the tithes. Why did I not ask more? Because I had no chance, in the first

instance, of getting the whole abolished, and I only got two-fifths, being less than I had demanded. I had therefore no chance of getting the entire destroyed; and because I am one of those who are always willing to accept an instalment, however small, of the real national debt—the people's debt—I determined to go on, *and look for the remainder when the first instalment should be completely realised.*' Again he said, 'My plan is to apply that fund in the various counties of Ireland to relieve the occupiers of land from grand-jury cess, and to defray the expense of hospitals, infirmaries, and institutions for the sick.' In other words, he proposed to confiscate the property of the Church, in order to relieve the land from its appropriate burdens, and keep free from it the relief or support of the poor.

42. Concluded.

"On no reasonable ground, therefore, can it be maintained that this concession to Irish agitation will have any other effect but that of feeding the ambition of the agitators, and leading them to prefer fresh demands, fatal to the very existence of an ecclesiastical establishment. It is the very essence of a church to be *universal;* there must be a clergyman in every parish. The provision for the clergy must be certain; it must be beyond the reach of fraud; it must be beyond the reach of agitation; it must be beyond the reach of influence, in order to avoid the disgrace of the pastor shaping his doctrine, not to the standard of truth, but to the taste of his hearers. It must be sufficient to maintain themselves and their families in decent competence; for the clergy are permitted to marry, and an unmarried priesthood is an unholy priesthood. The livings of Ireland are by no means above this standard; many of them are below it.*

* There were 1452 livings in Ireland, and returns had been obtained from 1123 of them. Of these—

Under £250 a-year, . . .	570
„ 450 „ . . .	854
„ 500 „ . . .	948

—*Ann. Reg.* 1835, p. 184.

CHAP. XXXV.

1835.

The whole would not average £200 a-year. It in a peculiar manner becomes the Whigs to oppose this mischievous and disastrous revolution. Whig principles consist not in death's-head-and-cross-bones denunciations against those who venture to exercise their civic franchises according to their consciences, nor in prayers for mercy limited to those in heaven, but not to be extended to those on this side the grave. Genuine Whig principles consist in a warm attachment to civil freedom, and the Protestant religion as by law established. This is a vital question, upon which no further compromise can be made. The property set apart by our ancestors to maintain and propagate the Protestant religion is sacred, and ought only to be applied to sacred uses. More than this, those who minister at the altar ought to live by the altar. That principle is high as heaven, and you cannot reach it; it is strong as the Almighty, and you cannot overturn it; it is fast as the Eternal, and you cannot unfix it. It is binding on a legislature consisting of Christian men, and acting on Christian principles, and no consideration on earth should induce you to compromise or destroy it."[1] *

[1] Parl. Deb. xxvii. 419, 439; Ann. Reg. 1835, 180-185.

43. Division on the question, and resignation of Sir R. Peel. April 2.

The debate, which was kept up with uncommon vigour and ability on both sides for four nights, was brought to a conclusion at four in the morning of the 7th April, when the division took place; and there appeared 322 for the motion, and 289 against it, leaving Ministers in a minority of 33. This hostile majority, much more considerable than what had occurred either on the choice of a Speaker or on the Address, was on a vital question of general policy, and therefore it left Sir R. Peel no alternative but to resign. A Cabinet Council accordingly was held on the following day, when it was unanimously resolved to have one more trial, and in the event of failure to resign; a determination which was announced in

* The above is but the skeleton of Sir James Graham's able speech on this occasion.

the House of Commons on the 8th April, after a second defeat of Ministers by a majority of 27—the numbers being 285 to 258—on the motion of Lord John Russell, "That it is the opinion of this house that no measure upon the subject of tithes can be satisfactory, or lead to a final adjustment, which does not embody the principle of the foregoing resolution." Sir R. Peel, in making this announcement, said: "The Government being firmly resolved to adhere to the principle of their own bill, and not to adopt the principle of the vote of last night, felt it to be there duty as public men to lay their offices at the disposal of his Majesty. I have been anxious to make this explanation as briefly as I can, and in a manner the least calculated to give offence or excite angry feelings. My whole political life has been spent in the House of Commons; the remainder of it will be spent in the House of Commons; and whatever may be the conflict of parties, I for one shall always wish, whether in a majority or a minority, to stand well with the House of Commons. (Immense cheering from all sides.) Under no circumstances whatever, under the pressure of no difficulties, under the influence of no temptation, will I ever advise the Crown to forego that great source of moral influence which consists in a strict adherence to the spirit, the practice, and even the letter, of the constitution." (Immense cheering from all quarters.)[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxvii. 984, 985.

44. New Ministry, and Lord Melbourne its head. April 18.

Sir R. Peel having thus resigned, in obedience to the principle of the constitution which requires the king's ministers to yield to a hostile majority of the House of Commons, when once decidedly pronounced on a vital question, nothing remained for the Sovereign himself but to accept a Ministry from the party which had in this manner got a majority in the House of Commons. Nearly ten days elapsed, however, during which the House was twice adjourned, before the arrangements were completed. At length, on the 18th April, Lord John Russell announced the formation of a new Adminis-

CHAP. XXXV.

1835.

tration in the House of Commons, and Lord Melbourne did the same in the House of Lords. The new Administration was substantially the same as the former which had been dismissed by the King: Lord Melbourne resumed his place as Premier; Lord John Russell as Home, Lord Palmerston as Foreign, Mr Charles Grant as Colonial, Secretary; Mr Spring Rice was Chancellor of the Exchequer; and Lord Auckland, First Lord of the Admiralty. The only material difference was, that Lord Brougham did not come into office again in any shape: the Great Seal was put in commission, the three commissioners being the Master of the Rolls, the Vice-Chancellor, and Mr Justice Bosanquet.[1] *

[1] Ann. Reg. 1835, 235, 236; Parl. Deb. xxvii. 1081.

Short as it was, the Administration of Sir R. Peel at this juncture was attended with most important effects, and it deserves a consideration much beyond what its

* The new Cabinet stood as follows:—

The Cabinet.

First Lord of the Treasury,	Lord Melbourne.
President of the Council,	Lord Lansdowne.
First Lord of the Admiralty,	Lord Auckland.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,	Lord Holland.
Woods, Forests, and Privy Seal,	Lord Duncannon.
Home Secretary,	Lord John Russell.
Foreign Secretary,	Lord Palmerston.
Colonial Secretary,	Mr Charles Grant.
India Board,	Mr J. C. Hobhouse.
Secretary-at-War,	Lord Howick.
Board of Trade,	Mr Poulett Thomson.
Chancellor of the Exchequer,	Mr Spring Rice.

Not in the Cabinet.

Attorney-General,	Sir John Campbell.
Solicitor-General,	Mr Ralfe.
Judge-Advocate General,	Mr Cutlar Fergusson.
Postmaster-General,	Earl of Minto.
Paymaster and Treasurer of the Navy,	Sir H. Parnell.
Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland,	Lord Mulgrave.
Lord-Chancellor of Ireland,	Lord Plunkett.
Attorney-General for Ireland,	Mr Perrin.
Solicitor-General for Ireland,	Mr O'Loghlin.
Lord-Advocate for Scotland,	Mr J. A. Murray.
Solicitor-General for Scotland,	Mr J. Cunninghame.

—*Ann. Reg.*, 1835, p. 236.

duration would seem to warrant in the modern history of Great Britain. It marked the period when the reaction had set in against the revolutionary fervour which had forced through the Reform Bill, and when the divided opinions of the country on that great change had come to manifest themselves in the returns of the House of Commons. Already the enthusiasm in favour of the bill had subsided: there was no longer to be heard the cry, "The bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill." Five-sixths of the House of Commons was no longer composed of Liberals. On the contrary, a considerable majority of English members were Conservatives — a majority, though a small one, of those of England and Scotland taken together, were on the same side, and the balance was cast the other way entirely by the Irish Roman Catholic members. This great change in opinion, of course, was not owing merely to Sir R. Peel's Ministry; it was the natural result of reflection and experience upon an intelligent though overheated generation. But the great and lasting effect of his being called to the helm, and of the consequent dissolution of Parliament, was that this change of opinion was *let into the Legislature*, and the great risk was avoided of four-fifths of the Legislature being of one way of thinking, while a majority of the constituency in Great Britain at least were of another.

1835.

45. Importance of this short Administration of Sir R. Peel.

This change at once disarmed the Reform Bill of its greatest dangers; and for this, though he probably neither foresaw nor intended it, King William deserves the lasting gratitude of his country. The great and tremendous risk was, that with the immense majority of Liberals which the unexampled fervour of the public mind had introduced into the House of Commons, and the proof recently afforded of the possibility of driving the House of Lords to consent to anything by the threat of creating peers, new and interminable organic changes might be forced upon the Government, and carried through by the influence of the heated urban electors

46. Which averted the danger of revolution in Great Britain.

CHAP. XXXV. 1835.

upon their representatives in Parliament before the nation had time to recover from its transports, and thus the constitution be overturned, as it had been in France, at the gallop, no one knew how or by whom. There can be no doubt that it was entirely owing to the firmness of Earl Grey and his Ministry that this danger had hitherto been averted; and though he was overthrown in the attempt, yet he deserves the lasting thanks of the country for having made it. But now, when a majority of British members was returned on the Conservative side, and only a majority of ten, including Ireland, on the Liberal, this immediate danger was at an end. On any question involving any further organic changes in the constitution, it was very doubtful whether they would have any majority in the House of Commons; and quite certain that, if carried there, the Lords would take courage to throw them out in the Upper House. Thus the popular branch of the legislature, from being so equally divided, was rendered in a great measure powerless either for good or for evil: and this was the greatest possible advantage which could be gained; for it gave the passions time to cool, and let in the still small voice of experience to discriminate between really beneficial reforms, and those which were inexpedient from the hazard with which they were attended.

47. Effect of this in restoring the House of Lords to their functions.

For the same reason this short Administration, and the change in the House of Commons with which it was attended, was followed by a most important effect upon the position and influence of the House of Lords. It restored the Upper House to its functions—it brought back the constitution to its mixed character of King, Lords, and Commons, instead of being, as for the preceding three years it had been, Commons alone. The effects of this restoration of the old balance have been very great, and are still sensibly felt. The few occasions on which, since that time, the balance has been again subverted, and measures forced upon the Upper House and the

Crown in defiance of their deliberate convictions, are sufficient to demonstrate what would have been the consequence of this being the settled and daily practice of the constitution. From the epoch of Sir R. Peel's first Administration, accordingly, we may date the restoration of the House of Lords to its legitimate functions, and discern the action of the important fly-wheel which the constitution had provided to regulate and steady the movements of the political machine.

48. Its pernicious effects upon Ireland.

But, for the same reasons, this change proved in the highest degree pernicious to Ireland, and it is to be regarded as the immediate cause of that long period of anarchy and paralysation of Government, which, after leading the nation through the apprenticeship to misrule, of repeal agitation, and monster meetings, was terminated at last by the awful catastrophe of 1847. Earl Grey, resting on a decisive majority in the House of Commons, had passed the Coercion Bill in defiance of O'Connell and the Catholic members; but he had thereby tranquillised the country, and reduced predial outrages, which had multiplied *sixteenfold* since the Catholic Relief Bill had passed, to a fourth of their amount when the Coercion Bill took effect.[1] But this vigorous and efficient administration of Irish affairs, so healthful to a country in its excited and distracted state, became impossible when the divided state of the English House of Commons forced the Liberal Ministry to look to the Irish Catholic members for their political existence. When the majority which kept Ministers in power was eight or ten only, and it soon fell to five or six, and that majority, such as it was, was secured only by the Irish Roman Catholics, it was impossible to resist their wishes. But those wishes being not formed from any regard to the interests of the country, but entirely shaped by the dictates of a foreign priesthood, whose object was the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland, and the resumption of the Church property, whatever they demanded, right or

[1] Ante, c. xxxi. § 41.

CHAP. XXXV. 1835.

wrong, required to be conceded: Their policy consisted in incessant agitation without breaking into open rebellion, and was to be directed, in the first instance, to the repeal of the Union, as it was well known that in a purely Irish legislature the Romish party would have a majority. This system, how distracting soever to the minds and ruinous to the industry of the country, the Government were obliged to tolerate, for that toleration was the price they paid for their political support. Thus the dissolution of 1834 stopped revolution in England, but left Ireland a prey to anarchy; and this observation affords the key to the history of both countries for the next seven years.

49. Liberal measures forced upon Government by the change.

But although the farther progress of organic change was prevented by the equal balance of parties in the British House of Commons after Sir R. Peel's dissolution, it is not to be supposed that a *change of policy* was not imposed upon the Government, and that even more, if in the hands of the Conservatives, than of those of their opponents. It was here that the great and lasting effects of the new constitution of the House of Commons, by the effect of the Reform Bill, became apparent. Experience had now proved that it was impossible to carry on the government upon the old principles. The effect of the entire change of the electoral body in Scotland and Ireland, and of the introduction of the ten-pound shopkeepers and tenants into the English boroughs, had been such that no administration could command a majority but by yielding on all vital questions to their wishes. This necessity was even more strongly felt by the Conservatives than the Liberals. By uniting with the Irish Catholic members, the Whigs had obtained a small majority over the British Conservatives, and it was possible for them, by such aid, and by surrendering Ireland to their direction, to keep a precarious hold of power for some time longer without any decided change in general policy. But this would evidently be impossible for the

Tories. Their dependence on the Church of England and the old country party rendered any coalition with the Irish Catholics impossible; while the whole strength of the counties, most of which were already in their hands, was unable to give them a majority over the united Liberals and Catholics. In these circumstances, retention of power by them had become impossible, without such a concession to the *urban* Liberals as might induce a considerable proportion of them to come over and join the Conservative ranks. It was well known what *they* wished—to buy cheap and sell dear was their object; living by trade, their desires were identified with its interest. Free Trade and a repeal of the Corn Laws were inscribed on their banners. Thus the great change in the commercial policy of the country, which Sir R. Peel introduced on his next accession to power, and which occasioned his fall, arose necessarily from his present position; and if he had not been defeated on the Irish Church question, he could have retained power only by introducing it ten years sooner than was actually done.

50 Great rise of Sir R. Peel in general estimation from this short Administration.

There can be no doubt that Sir R. Peel rose much in general estimation, both in the legislature and the country, from his possession of power, brief as it was. His measures were judicious and conciliatory; his language was eminently calculated to disarm his opponents, and dispel the opinion so sedulously inculcated by them, that the return of the Tories to power would be the signal for a return to the old abuses, and the stoppage of all useful and necessary reforms. His skill in debate, his perfect parliamentary tact, and thorough knowledge of the assembly he was addressing, and on whose suffrages he depended, had secured for him the respect of all parties. Descended from a mercantile family, and identified both by birth and interest with the commercial community, he possessed a much more thorough acquaintance with the statistics and prospects of trade than any of his oppo-

CHAP. XXXV. 1835.

nents; and his speeches bore that air of business and thorough acquaintance with the subject, which, more than all the flowers of rhetoric, win the confidence and command the assent of men engaged in the real business of life. The stride he made in the acquisition of general confidence, accordingly, was very great during his brief Administration; and he was already looked to by many, even of his political opponents, as the man of the age, who alone understood the real interests of the country, and, by turning reform into the channel of practical improvement, would reap for the country the fruits of the seed which had been sown by his predecessors.

51. Merits of Lord J. Russell's proposal regarding the Irish Church.

The proposal of Lord J. Russell, which occasioned the overthrow of Sir R. Peel, and return of the Whigs to power, was very skilfully devised to combine all the discordant elements of hostility to the Tory Administration, and appeared at first sight to be founded in rational and philanthropic principles. But, nevertheless, it is now evident that it was calculated to afford no real benefit to the country; and that supposing it carried, all the evils which desolated Ireland would not only remain, but in many respects be aggravated. Education is an unspeakable benefit to men, when they have emerged from a state of destitution and wretchedness, and are beginning to acquire ideas of comfort and wellbeing, but it can little avail those who are perpetually in want of the necessaries of life. It is in the soil prepared by a certain amount of physical comfort, that the seeds of intellectual elevation can alone come to maturity. Oppressed as Ireland was at this time by two million of paupers, for whom there was no legal relief, and distracted by agrarian outrage, and ceaseless agitation raised for sacerdotal purposes, which repelled all English capital from its shores, the proposed change might be a triumph to a rival priesthood, but it could afford no real relief to a starving peasantry. What Ireland required was, not the abstraction of £200,000 a-year from the Church property, but the removal of two

million emigrants from its shores; what was likely to heal its wounds, was not a change which would stimulate the activity and augment the ambition of a foreign ecclesiastical power, but such a vigorous administration of justice as should stop the withering progress of agitation, and permit the entrance of domestic capital and enterprise already overflowing in the neighbouring island.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

DOMESTIC HISTORY OF ENGLAND, FROM THE RETURN OF THE WHIGS TO POWER IN APRIL 1835, TO THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA IN JUNE 1837.

CHAP. XXXVI.

1835.

1. Lord Melbourne's announcement of his principles of government.

LORD MELBOURNE, on 18th April, in informing the House of Lords that he was again at the head of the Government, dwelt much on the difficulties he had had to contend with in forming his Administration, which he described as having been "peculiarly great and arduous, and some of them of a severe and mortifying nature." He declared that he meant to proceed on the same principles on which the former Government was based, and they were "the principles of a safe, prudent, and truly efficient reformation—principles the tendency of which was not to subvert or endanger, but, on the contrary, to improve, strengthen, and establish the institutions of the country. And in regard to ecclesiastical government, every measure contemplated in reference to that subject would have for its end the increase of true piety and religion through the whole of his Majesty's dominions. I do not know whether I shall have the assistance of Mr O'Connell or not, but I can state most positively that I have taken no steps to secure it; I have entered into no terms whatever, nor said anything from which an inference can be drawn to secure that individual's support.[1] As to tithes, I do not hesitate to say that I consider

[1] Parl. Deb. xxvii. 985; Ann. Reg. 1835, 237-239.

myself as pledged to act on the resolution of the other House."

Nothing could be more temperate and judicious than this language; but in the divided state of the country on most subjects, it was no easy matter to carry them into execution; for what would conciliate one section of the supporters of the Ministry, would alienate another. The extremely small majority also, not exceeding ten or twelve, which alone the Ministry could command on any vital question, rendered it impossible to introduce any ulterior measures of organic change, which were loudly demanded by the extreme Liberal party. In these circumstances, much came to depend on the personal character of the Prime Minister; and without a thorough appreciation of it, the annals of his administration will be very imperfectly understood. Fortunately a portrait of him has been drawn by one who knew him well, both in public and private, and whose portrait, though characterised by the humorous style of the author, cannot be suspected of undue prejudice, as it is from the hand of a zealous Whig partisan. "Viscount Melbourne," says Sydney Smith, "declared himself quite satisfied with the Church as it stood; but if the public had any desire to alter it, they might do so if they pleased. He might have said the same thing of the monarchy or of any of our other institutions, and there is in the declaration a permissiveness and good-humour which in public men has seldom been exceeded. Carelessness, however, is but a poor imitation of genius; and the formation of a wise and well-reflected plan of reform conduces more to the lasting fame of a Minister than the affected contempt of duty which every man sees to be mere vanity, and a vanity of no very high description. Everything about him seems to betoken careless desolation; every one would suppose, from his manner, that he was playing at chuck-farthing with human happiness, that he would giggle away the great Charter, and decide by the method of tee-totum

2. Character of Lord Melbourne by Sydney Smith.

CHAP. XXXVI. 1835.

whether my lords the bishops should retain their seats in the House of Lords. All this is the mere vanity of surprising, and making us believe he can play with kingdoms as other men can with nine-pins. I cannot, however, allow to this Minister the merit of indifference to his actions; I believe him to be conscientiously alive to the good or the evil he is doing, and that his caution has more than once arrested the gigantic projects of the Lycurgus* of the Lower House. I am sorry to be obliged to brush away the magnificent fabric of levity and gaiety he has reared; but while I accuse our Minister of honesty and diligence, I deny that he is careless or rash; he is nothing more than a man of good understanding and good principles, disguised in the eternal and somewhat wearisome affectation of a political *roué*." [1]

[1] Sydney Smith's Works, iii. 216.

3. Defeats of Ministers at the new elections.

When the elections, consequent on the seats that had been vacated by the new appointments, came to take place, Ministers received several defeats, which demonstrated the precarious ground on which they stood. Mr Littleton, member for Staffordshire, having been elevated to the peerage by the title of Lord Hatherton in order to enable him to sit in that house as one of the Commissioners of the Great Seal, a vacancy occurred in that county, and a Conservative was returned. Mr Charles Grant having also been made a peer by the title of Lord Glenelg, a vacancy occurred in the county of Inverness, which he had represented, and it immediately returned a Conservative candidate. Lord John Russell himself was defeated in Devonshire by Mr Parker, a Conservative, by a majority of 627. Thus the majority of seven, which carried the amendment to the Address, was reduced to ONE; each of the three votes changed counting two on a division. Such was the real majority with which the Whigs resumed power; but a similar majority had done great things in former days; it had introduced the Reform Bill in England, and ushered in the Revolution of France.

* Lord John Russell.

In the present instance, however, the Administration was in much safer hands, and having tasted somewhat of revolution, the country was less likely to promote it. The only effect of this close division of parties in the House of Commons, was to augment the dependence of Ministers on the Catholic members of Ireland,—a state of things ruinous to that country, and ere long attended by the most disastrous consequences.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1835, 239.

4. Ministerial measures of reform.

Although the new Ministers, while in opposition, had made it a serious ground of complaint against Sir R. Peel that he would obstruct the progress of useful reform, yet it soon appeared that they themselves had even less important changes to introduce than he had contemplated. Commutations of tithes, the conversion of church-rates, and ecclesiastical reform in England, all of which the late Minister had contemplated, were laid aside, and Lord John Russell announced that the only two remedial measures which Government were prepared to introduce this session, were CORPORATION REFORM, and a bill regarding Irish tithes, to be founded on the late resolution of the Commons. Nothing was said concerning the Dissenters, in whose favour Sir R. Peel had prepared a measure. This gave rise to great dissatisfaction at the time; but the new Administration were wise in their limitation of reform at present to their two measures, for they were quite enough to be matured in one session; and Lord John Russell justly remarked, that the experience of the last three years proved that nothing was so prejudicial to the progress of real reform, as introducing too great a multiplicity of measures at one time.[2]

[2] Parl. Deb. xxviii. 4, 5; Ann. Reg. 1835, 239.

5. Scotch Burgh Reform Bill.

The administration of the English corporations had long been complained of, and unquestionably they exhibited many abuses, and in many instances loudly called for amendment. A corporate reform had already been introduced into Scotland based on the principle of parliamentary reform, and which settled the whole matter by the simple rule that the parliamentary electors of every

CHAP. XXXVI. 1835.

burgh were to be the municipal also; that the larger burghs should be divided into wards, each of which should send two representatives to the town-council, to be elected by the qualified electors within their respective bounds; and that the provost and bailies, corresponding to the English lord mayor and aldermen, should be chosen by the councillors, and be invested with the whole powers of magistrates within the bounds of the burgh. These functionaries were to be elected for three years, and one-third of the council were to go out every year to make way for successors similarly elected. Certain corporate bodies, as the Merchants' House, Trades' House, &c., were to send representatives of their own to the council, but the great majority were elected by the parliamentary electors, and they were invested with the entire right of administration of the corporate property and patronage of every description. The experience of the working of this change has as yet been too short to admit of any safe conclusion being drawn as to its ultimate effects; but hitherto, at least, it has not promised much in the shape of real amendment. The old close system has been effectually abolished, and the political influence of the town-councils, which was always considerable, often great, has been entirely thrown into the Liberal scale; but beyond this no material change for the better has taken place in the administration of the burgh affairs. The debates at the council boards of the great towns have been too often scenes of unseemly contention; the ambition of newly acquired power has evinced all the restlessness and grasping disposition which so often accompanies it; many old abuses have stopped, but many new ones been introduced. It was soon discovered that the vesting power in several thousand electors did not terminate the sway of cliques, but only caused them to be composed of different persons; and such were the sums often wasted in unprofitable litigation and legislation, that men came to regret the good old times when a small part of the amount was squandered

on the comparatively innocuous system of eating and drinking.

6. Government report on the English corporations.

The English Municipal Reform Bill was gone about with more caution, but the Government were not the less determined to carry it through. The Whigs had long been jealous of the English corporations, many of which had come, in process of time, to be little more than private property of a few individuals veiled under the name of corporate estates, and all of which they regarded, often with reason, as the strongholds of Toryism and corruption, utterly inconsistent with the popular principles introduced by the Reform Bill. A commission had, with a view to a change, been issued by Earl Grey's Administration, and they presented, in the end of May, a report which strongly condemned the existing system of corporate government.* Although this report was much complained of as having been in a great measure founded on evidence taken *ex parte*, and from witnesses exclusively summoned on one side (the usual case with commissions issued by Government for party purposes), yet there can be no doubt it was in the main founded in truth. At any rate, the old system of the close management of corporations was evidently utterly inconsistent with the new

* "In conclusion, we report to your Majesty that there prevails amongst the inhabitants of the great majority of the incorporated towns a general, and, in our opinion, a just dissatisfaction with these municipal institutions; a distrust of the self-elected municipal councils, whose powers are subject to no popular control, and whose acts and proceedings, being secret, are unchecked by the influence of general opinion; a distrust of the municipal magistracy, tainting with suspicion the local administration of justice, and often accompanied with a distrust of the persons by whom the law is administered; a discontent under the burdens of local taxation, while revenues that ought to be applied for the public advantage are diverted from their legitimate use, and are sometimes wastefully bestowed for the benefit of individuals, sometimes squandered for purposes injurious to the morals and character of the people. We therefore feel it to be our duty to represent to your Majesty that the existing municipal corporations of England and Wales neither possess nor deserve the confidence of your Majesty's subjects, and that a thorough reform must be effected before they can become, what we humbly submit to your Majesty they ought to be, useful and efficient instruments of local government." One of the commissioners gave in objections to this report, and another dissented from it entirely.—*Ann. Reg.* 1835, pp. 241, 242.

CHAP. XXXVI. 1835.

and popular regime under the Reform Bill, and the Ministry had felt too strongly the effect of the defection of a number of boroughs in the late elections, not to be aware that it had become a question of life and death to them to prevent such a pernicious example from spreading any farther.

7. Heads of the ministerial Corporate Reform Bill.

Founded on the report of the commissioners, the Government, on the 5th June, brought forward the ministerial plan of corporate reform. It was very sweeping—more so in some respects than the Scotch Municipal Bill had been. The number of boroughs embraced in the bill was 178, London being excepted, for what reason does not very distinctly appear, unless it was that Ministers were afraid of endangering their small majority if they interfered with the numerous vested interests wound up with its incorporations. Of the 178 boroughs 93 were parliamentary, and their boundaries remained fixed as they had been by the Reform Bill—the boundaries of the remaining 85 stood as they had been before until Parliament should direct an alteration. Each borough was divided into wards, varying in number according to its size : Liverpool was divided into sixteen, others into ten or twelve. The government of boroughs was vested in a mayor and town-council; but they were to be elected by all persons rated to the support of the poor in them for the three preceding years, and residing within the boroughs, or within a circuit of seven miles around. The mayor was to be elected annually for one year only, he being, during his mayoralty, a justice of peace for the borough and adjoining county. The councillors were to be elected for three years, one-third going out annually to make way for others similarly elected. All the old modes of acquiring the freedom of corporations, as by birth, apprenticeship, &c., were to be abolished, as also all exclusive rights of trade or carrying on handicrafts within their limits. The town-councils were to become, by the statute, trustees of all the corpo-

rate and charitable funds administered by the old corporations, with power to appoint committees for their management, and to choose persons, being burgesses, for their directors. The police was to be entirely under the direction of the town-councils, but not the licensing of public-houses, which was to be intrusted to the justices. With respect to the administration of justice, to 129 of the boroughs a commission of the peace was to be granted, and the town-councils in them were to be empowered to recommend the persons to be put into the commission of the peace. The remaining fifty-four might have a commission on applying for it from the Crown. In the larger towns applying for quarter sessions the chairman was to be a barrister of not less than five years' standing, appointed by the Crown.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxviii. 472, 489; Ann. Reg. 1835, 245, 246.

8. General features of the bill in a political point of view.

Apart from the technical details essential to give a legal view of this most important bill, the leading features of it, in a political and general point of view, were these,—1. The choice of town-councils and magistrates was intrusted to a new electoral body, created for that special purpose, of all persons rated for the relief of the poor, which was equivalent to household suffrage; 2. The qualification was *uniform*, and there was no representation of classes, as guilds or incorporated trades; 3. The old freemen were disfranchised, and all acquisitions of the municipal suffrage or rights of freemen by any other means than being rated for the poor-rates, were for the future abolished, though the rights of existing freemen were saved; 4. Publicity was enjoined upon the administration of all trusts and corporate funds, which were entirely devolved with the general management of the boroughs; but—5. There was no money or other qualification for councillors; and—6. The administration of justice was still reserved to the Crown, which appointed the recorders and justices by whom it was to be carried on, the town-councils being only entitled to recommend persons for these offices.

CHAP. XXXVI.

1835.

9. Argument in support of the bill.

In support of this bill, it was argued by Lord John Russell, Lord Melbourne, and Mr Hobhouse: "The plan of municipal government proposed by Ministers is intended to provide for 183 corporations, to which the bill is to extend, including a population of at least two millions. Many of these corporations govern large and important towns, of which they did not properly represent the property, intelligence, and population. In Bedford the corporate body was only one-seventieth of the population, and one-fortieth of the property of the town. In Oxford there were 1400 electors, many of whom did not reside in the town, and seldom more than 500 voted at an election. In Norwich there were 3225 resident freemen, of whom 1123 were not rated at all, and of these 315 were paupers. Out of £25,541 annual rental no less than £18,224 belonged to persons noway connected with the corporation. At Cambridge, out of a population of 20,000, of whom 1434 were £10 householders, there were only 118 freemen, and of the annual rental of £25,490 only £2110 was the property of freemen belonging to the corporation. These were only examples of the strange anomalies which everywhere else prevailed. Corporations so constituted are altogether unfitted for gaining the only object for which they ought to exist, viz., to represent the property of the town in which they are situated, to entertain sympathy with the general feelings of the inhabitants, to take care of their interests, and to afford them that protection which the governing ought to afford to those who were charged with its expenses. On the contrary, they engender a complete separation, a mutual jealousy and distrust, between the governing power and the body of the people. A few persons carrying on the government for their own benefit were connected with a portion of the lower classes, whose votes they purchased, and whose habits they demoralised. The abuses resulting from this were enormous. In the distribution of the charity funds of such

places it will in general be found that two-thirds or three-fourths of the whole is distributed among those who belong to the governing body. Part of these funds, intended for the general benefit, are bestowed on a few individuals, part are squandered on feasts and entertainments, part in corrupting and bribing the freemen in order to give them an inducement to stand by their party when any political event should require their suffrages. In short, it has been abundantly proved by the extensive inquiries made by the commissioners, both in the larger and smaller boroughs, that the general if not universal practice had been to use the powers of municipal corporations, not for the good government and benefit of the towns over which they presided—not in order that they might be 'well and quietly governed,' in terms of the charters, but for the sole purpose of establishing an interest which might be useful in the election of members of Parliament.

10. Continued.

"To remedy these evils, which are of universal notoriety, it is proposed that there should be one uniform system of government, one uniform franchise for the purposes of elections, and the like description of officers, with the exception of some of the larger places in which it might be desirable to have a recorder or some such officer. In regard to the qualification of electors, it has been deemed advisable not to adhere to the parliamentary qualification; for if they were to enact that no other persons but those who possessed that particular franchise should have a vote in the government of corporations, they would be raising a feeling of hatred and jealousy against those persons as the monopolisers of all the power in their respective towns, to the exclusion of other individuals. The corporate franchise, therefore, has been extended to all rate-payers, all of whom have an interest in the property of the corporation and good government of the borough, and all of whom contribute in proportion to their means to the general expenses of the

CHAP. XXXVI. 1835.

borough. All the old methods of acquiring the freedom of a corporation, as by birth, apprenticeship, &c., are to be abolished, saving the rights of the present holders during their lives; and the same is to be done with all exclusive rights of trade, under the like saving of the rights of existing freemen during their natural lives.

11. Concluded.

"It is in vain to contend that this eventual suppression of freemen, and their present exclusion as such from the elections of members of municipal councils, is a confiscation of existing rights. To leave them in possession of power, is to entail upon the boroughs the 'curse of these poor, degraded, wretched, demoralised freemen,' whose rights, when unconnected with property or residence within borough, are nothing but an usurpation, which has been tolerated because it was found to be, for political purposes, convenient for all parties. These freemen were not necessarily resident in the borough; they need not possess any qualification as to property; they need not pay rates; and, for anything which appears to the contrary, these freemen might pass the greater part of the year in jail, and come out of it and give their vote for a member of Parliament! The consequence is, that in this degraded state they are open to all sorts of corruption, and degrade and pollute the electoral body of which they form a part. As far as regards rights of property, whether present or contingent, connected with such freemen, they should be respected; but as to the public rights, a trust for others which they conferred, they cannot be too soon severed from a body which has proved itself unfit to exercise them."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxvii. 489, 499; Ann. Reg. 1835, 243, 252.

12. Argument of the Conservatives on the other side.

Great part of the abuses which are here described as existing in the old corporations were so well known to be real, that Sir R. Peel wisely offered no resistance to the second reading of the bill; that is, he did not contest its principle, but took his ground on some of its details. That which excited the warmest debates, both in the Lords and Commons, was the clause preventing the

acquisition of the rights of freemen by the old methods after the date of the bill. This question was very important in a political point of view, because these freemen constituted in all a considerable part, in some boroughs a majority, of the existing electors; and therefore, if their continuance after the death of the present holders was to be prevented, the composition of the electoral body in boroughs would undergo a great change, and many political influences might eventually be destroyed. It was accordingly contended by Sir R. Peel, Lord Stanley, and Sir James Graham: "Without going the length of asserting that the freemen are altogether immaculate, which can probably be predicated of no body of electors of any grade, it may yet be worthy of consideration whether they are to be *disfranchised*—deprived of their existing electoral rights. The question is not, shall we admit these men now for the first time to parliamentary or municipal rights, but shall we *deprive* them of those rights which they and their predecessors have enjoyed for centuries past? Though professing only to regulate the municipal rights, the bill makes a deep incision on political; for it goes, after the existing generation, to destroy many modes by which those political rights might be acquired. If this was meant to be done, it should be set about fairly and openly, in a manly and straightforward manner, and not covertly, under the cloak of providing for the better police and government of boroughs.

13. Continued.

"The corporations have always declared, that, when it was once passed, they were willing to accept the Reform Bill as our constitutional charter, and abide by it as such; and prophesied that any proposal for its modification was much more likely to come from the authors of the measure than its opponents. Already the prophecy has been verified! The reformers were the first to propose, covertly and insidiously, a great and important change on the Reform Bill! What did they mean by first bringing in a bill which was based on 'perpetuating' the

CHAP. XXXVI. 1835.

rights of freemen, and recognising them as an integral part of the constitution, and now within three years bringing in another, intended covertly to deprive them of their true rights? Was that the respect for popular privileges on which the Liberal party so much prided themselves? Was it not a precedent for breaking up the 'final settlement,' which may be made use of on future occasions, till not a shadow of it was left? The present Ministry think their political interests will be advanced by disfranchising the freemen, though their rights are guaranteed by the Reform Bill, and therefore they bring in a bill to cut off their rights. Another ministry may deem it for their advantage to extinguish the ten-pound tenants, and they will found on this very bill as a precedent to justify their doing so. Where is this to stop? All confidence in the durability of our second charter will be destroyed, if, within three years after it was passed, so important a branch as the freemen in boroughs is lopped off under pretence of municipal reform.

14. Concluded.

"It is in vain to say the exclusion of freemen is necessary, because many cases of corruption have been proved in some boroughs. If so, by all means punish the guilty parties, or disfranchise the convicted borough, but do not punish the innocent for the guilty, or involve *all* freemen in one sweeping act of condemnation, because *some of them* have been detected in malpractices. Beware of such an argument as goes to justify the disfranchising whole bodies of men on account of delinquencies chargeable on some of their number. Are the ten-pound tenants so very pure? Have none of them been convicted on the clearest evidence of corruption? It has been clearly proved in the case of Stafford, Liverpool, and many other instances, that the ten-pound tenants are fully as open to bribes as the old freemen. If it shall prove so in future years, on what principle can you resist a bill for their wholesale disfranchisement, based on the precedent of this bill?[1] And in this way how soon will the

[1] Parl. Deb. xxvii. 510, 521; Ann. Reg. 1835, 256, 257.

second *Magna Charta* be abrogated, and the authors of the Reform Bill stand in the situation of having laid their murderous hands on their own offspring!"

15. Fate of the bill in the Commons and Peers.

On a division, the clause disfranchising the freemen was only carried by a majority of 28, the numbers being 262 to 234. The English members were in a majority of fifteen against the disfranchisement, and the balance was cast the other way entirely by the Scotch and Irish members. Several other divisions, showing majorities much the same in favour of Ministers, took place on other clauses in the bill; and at length it was passed as originally proposed on the 17th July. But its fate was very different in the House of Lords. It was first resolved in that assembly to hear counsel in support of several petitions which were presented against the bill, a resolution ominous of the fate which awaited the measure in that assembly. Counsel were heard, and evidence led against the bill, as infringing on the vested rights of freemen. It was strongly contended against the bill, that by it 183 corporations, many of which had existed for centuries, would be destroyed, the law of election for the officers to govern them completely altered, and the reappointment of others vested in a democracy which was to succeed to their vacated seats. The lower, the less educated, classes of the community would thus become invested with all the rights and powers which now belong to the entire community. All the charity funds and estates of corporations would be taken out of the hands to which they had been intrusted by the donors, and vested in new ones, of whom they never heard, and to whom they would never have intrusted them. A more complete and wholesale spoliation never was attempted in any nation. On a division, Ministers, on an amendment moved by Lord Lyndhurst to omit the clause disfranchising the freemen, were left in a minority of 93, the numbers being 130 to 37! Lord Lyndhurst immediately followed up this victory by a motion which had been rejected by the

CHAP. XXXVI. 1835.

Commons, to preserve to freemen their parliamentary franchise as secured to them by the Reform Bill, which was carried without a division, that on the preceding motion having determined its fate. Government, however, made a determined resistance to the next amendment, moved by Lord Lyndhurst, which was to the effect, that instead of the council being chosen from the whole rate-payers, as the bill at present stood, they should be divided into six classes, and the council should only be eligible from the highest class. It was carried against them, however, by a majority of 81, the numbers being 120 to 39. Another modification, that the council in the larger boroughs should have a personal estate worth £1000, and in the smaller of £500, was introduced on the motion of Lord Devon. A further amendment was carried by a majority of eighty-seven, to the effect that a fourth of the council and the town-clerks should hold their offices for life. These amendments, with the exception of that which declared the town-clerks and a fourth of the council elected for life, which was changed into six years, were adopted by the Commons on the motion of Lord John Russell, not without the strongest expressions of disapprobation by the Radical members; and the bill, as thus amended, finally passed on 7th September, and received the royal assent.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1835, 269, 288; Parl. Deb. xxvii. 539, 541.

16. Reflections on this change.

The Municipal Corporation Bill was the greatest organic change introduced since the passing of the Reform Act, and in some respects it was little inferior in importance to that celebrated measure. It is memorable also as exhibiting the immense effect already produced by Sir R. Peel's dissolution, and the restoration of the real working of the constitution by the House of Lords being replaced in its functions as an independent deliberative branch of the Legislature. By the amendment introduced by the Peers, which preserved the municipal and parliamentary rights of the freemen, it was stripped of its worst revolutionary features; and it undoubtedly

remedied many indefensible abuses which had crept in, in the course of ages, under the old close system. The old freemen were by no means a creditable class of voters, and being the lowest class of the community, they were most accessible to open corruption; but still it would have been a dangerous precedent to have disfranchised the whole for the faults of some; for as no class is immaculate, there is no saying how far this precedent might have been carried. But the great principle of the bill, that of declaring the councils eligible by the *whole rate-payers* as well as the freemen, remained unchanged, and, for good or for evil, worked out its appropriate results. What those fruits are have been now ascertained by Experience, and were even at the time anticipated by Reason, however little its still small voice had a chance of being heard amidst the din of the first great constitutional struggle which had arisen since the passing of the Reform Bill.

17. Its great defect.

The great fault of the Municipal Reform Bill was not what it destroyed, but what it created; yet so strangely ignorant were the Conservative leaders of the real tendency of the changes introduced in this respect, that the subject was scarcely mooted, and never dwelt upon in either House of Parliament. The old corporations had very generally abused their trusts, and introduced for their own benefit many corruptions, and therefore it was quite right to dispossess them of their management; and Lord John Russell said with truth, that the only way to introduce a better system of administration was to let in a fair proportion of the "property, intelligence, and population of the borough." This being the principle on which the bill professed to be based, how was it carried out? Why, by admitting the *whole rate-payers*, in one undistinguished mass, to choose the councillors in whom the entire government of the borough was vested. Of these rate-payers, at least three-fourths of course occupied houses rated at or below £10; that being, at the very least, the

CHAP. XXXVI. 1835.

proportion of the working to all other classes of society. This, then, was the class in whom the Municipal Reform Bill placed the entire government of boroughs and corporations in England and Wales—in a huge mass of persons inhabiting houses rented at from £5 to £10 a-year. It was a mockery to speak of property or intelligence being represented, when they were outvoted four to one by publicans and workmen. It is the more extraordinary that Government should have committed the enormous mistake of establishing the constituency on this basis, that they were so much alive to the abuses of the franchise by the freemen, that they themselves had proposed to disfranchise them all both of municipal and political rights. But their idea seems to have been, "seeing that a portion of the lowest class of freemen have introduced abuses, and proved unworthy of trust, therefore we will succeed in remedying them, and establishing a pure administration, by giving the *same class* the entire control of the corporations." The common argument that the multitude will govern well because it is for their interest to be well governed, is utterly fallacious. That holds good only so long as they are the governed; when they become the governors, the desire is overcome by a much stronger one, viz., to benefit themselves by governing others ill.

18. True principle on the subject.

The only way in which it is possible to introduce good government on the representative principle, either as regards municipalities or nations, is to have the representation based, *not on numbers, but on classes*. This may be effected either by arranging the whole citizens in classes, according to the amount which they annually contribute in the shape of taxes or personal service to the State, or in guilds or corporations; according to their different trades or avocations; and having the ruling body chosen, not by a simple majority of numbers told by head of the whole, but by the different classes or trades thus separately arranged. The working classes should by no means be excluded, but

they should not be allowed to form the majority, and consequently rule the whole. The first principle was adopted in ancient Rome, where the citizens were arranged in thirty centuries, according to their contributions to the public service, and the government officers were chosen by the votes, not of the citizens, but the centuries: the last is the principle on which the representative system, both in parliaments and municipalities, has been generally established in modern Europe. Wherever the representative system has acted well and lasted long, it has been rested on one or other basis; the long duration and immense prosperity induced by the old English constitution, was owing to the same system having, amidst many imperfections, by indirect means, and through the intervention of the close boroughs, been practically put in operation in these islands. Based on this principle of the representation of classes, the system affords the best security for good government which the wit of man has ever yet devised, because it brings the great interests of society to bear directly on the administration of affairs, and affords a constant check upon their mismanagement. Based on the opposite principle of the representation of mere numbers, it becomes the greatest curse which can afflict society, and must speedily work out its own destruction; because it subjects the community to the irresponsible government of the most numerous, but at the same time the most dangerous, most uninformed, and most corruptible portion of its members.*

* This is exactly Mr Burke's view of the question. "There is," says he, "no argument for supposing *the multitude, told by head, to be the people.* Such a multitude can have no sort of title to alter the seat of power in society, in which it ever ought to be the obedient, and not the ruling power. What power may belong to the whole mass, in which mass the natural aristocracy, or what by convention is appointed to represent and strengthen it, acts *in its proper place, with its proper weight, and without being subjected to violence,* is a deeper question. To enable men to act with the weight and character of a people, and to answer the ends for which they are incorporated into that capacity, we must suppose them to be in that state of habitual social discipline, in which the wiser, the more expert, and the more opulent, conduct, and, by conducting, enlighten and protect the weaker, the less knowing, and the less provided with the goods of fortune. When the multitude are not under this discipline,

CHAP. XXXVI.

1835.

19. Ministerial bill for Church reform. June 26.

While these important discussions were going on regarding municipal reform, Government introduced a bill for the regulation of the Irish Church, embodying, of course, the appropriation principle, which had been recognised by the house on the late memorable debate, and occasioned the fall of the late Administration. It consisted of two parts,—one for the collection and reduction of tithes, and the other for the creation of a surplus, and its appropriation to the moral and religious instruction of the whole community, without any distinction of religious creed. The bill passed a second reading without a division, Sir R. Peel reserving to himself to move an instruction to the committee regarding the appropriation clause. This he accordingly did, by moving in committee that the bill should be divided into two parts—one containing the remedial, the other the appropriation clause. This was objected to by Ministers, on the ground that it was only a device to enable the House of Lords to pass the one bill and throw out the other, which it certainly was. On a division, Ministers had a majority of 37—the numbers being 319 to 282. This majority, like all those at this period, was secured entirely through the Irish and Scotch members; of the English members, a majority of 8 were in favour of the motion, but no less than 63 Irish were against, and only 34 for it. This division was decisive of the fate of the bill in the Lower House; and to render it more palatable to the Upper, Ministers proposed an annual grant of £50,000 a-year from the Consolidated Fund, to form the basis of a fund, to which the church property appropriated to educational purposes was to be added. This step, however, failed in disarming the opposition of the Conservative peers, who, consider-

they can scarce be said to be in civil society. Give once a certain constitution which produces a variety of conditions and circumstances in a State, and there is in natural reason a principle which, for their own benefit, postpones not the interest, but the judgment of those who are *numero priores* to those who are *virtute et honore majores*."—"Appeal from the Old to the New Whigs;" *Works*, vi. 216, 228.

ing this question as involving an important public principle, threw out the appropriation clause by a majority of 97—the numbers being 138 to 41. This defeat so disconcerted Ministers that they abandoned the bill in the Lower House, and it was accordingly dropped for the present. At the same time, a bill was hastily brought in and passed, authorising Government to suspend proceedings against the clergy for recovery of the £1,000,000 which had been advanced to them during the worst periods of the combination against tithes; a humane and praiseworthy step, for if recovery of the sum had been attempted, as it must have been, under the acts authorising the advance, the Irish clergy would have been involved in total ruin.[1] *

[1] Parl. Deb. xxix. 790-840, 1146, and xxx. 934; Ann. Reg. 1835, 297, 315.

While measures of party politics were thus fiercely debated, and attended by those narrow divisions in the House of Commons, those which, without benefiting either

* Sir R. Peel, in the course of the debate on this question, gave the following account of the real clear revenues of the Irish Church, which had been so often represented as the richest in the world, and enjoying an income of £3,000,000 :—

Tithes composition,		£507,367
Glebes,		76,700
Gross income,		£584,067
Deduct three-tenths,	£152,700	
Average,	57,632	
Woods and Forests,	8,872	
		219,204
Clear income,		£364,863
Parishes,		2505
Having fifty Protestants and upwards,		1121
Having below fifty,		860
Benefices,		1385
Average income of incumbents of benefices,		£188

The Report of the Commissioners of Public Instruction in the same year enumerated the inhabitants according to their creeds thus :—

Established Church,	853,064
Presbyterians,	642,356
Other Dissenters,	21,808
Total Protestants,	1,517,228
Roman Catholics,	6,427,712

—*Ann. Reg.*, 1835, pp. 290, 296.

CHAP. XXXVI.

1835.

20. Defeat of motions regarding the currency, agricultural distress, and proceedings regarding Orange lodges. June 4.

side in the house, went only to relieve the distresses or stimulate the industry of the country, were thrown out by large majorities. A motion by Mr Cayley, the able and patriotic member for the North Riding of Yorkshire, to appoint a select committee to inquire if there be not effectual means within the reach of Parliament to afford substantial relief to the agriculture of the United Kingdom, and specially to recommend to the committee the subject of a silver standard, or a conjoined silver and gold one, "was thrown out, after a three nights' debate, by a majority of 216 to 126, being very nearly the proportion of the borough to the county members. A motion of Lord Chandos for an address to his Majesty, representing the general agricultural distress which prevailed, with a view to the immediate removal of some part of those burdens to which the land is peculiarly subject through the pressure of general and local taxation, "met with no better
May 22. fate: it was lost by a majority of 211 to 150. The alliance of Government with the Roman Catholic members for Ireland, and their entire dependence on them for a parliamentary majority, obliged them to yield to a motion of Mr Finn for a committee to inquire into the Orange lodges of that country; a system of mutual defence for the protection of the Protestants, often scattered in small numbers through multitudes of hostile Ribbonmen and Catholics. It led, however, to no other result than that it revealed the existence of Orange lodges in thirty-four regiments of the army, a practice which was justly denounced as dangerous to the discipline and subordination of an armed force. An attempt to implicate the Duke of Cumberland, the grand-master of the institution, in a participation with these military lodges, though very anxiously pressed, proved unsuccessful. There could be no doubt, however, that the existence of Orange societies in the army was a serious evil, and fraught with danger under any circumstances; and

the House of Commons having, in the next session of Parliament, passed a resolution praying the King to take such measures as would be effectual for the suppression of such societies, the Duke of Cumberland wisely dissolved all the Orange societies in Ireland. The Ribbon societies, however, were not dissolved, and devastation, murder, and outrage continued for long after to be organised by them, which afterwards led to a partial revival on a smaller scale of the Orange lodges as an indispensable measure of defence.[1]

1835. Feb. 23, 1836.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1835, 348-350—1836, 19; Parl. Deb. xxxi. 810. 832, 870.

21. The budget, and extinction of the surplus.

Although the House of Commons, by a great majority, had refused to listen to the tale of agricultural distress, or inquire into the currency laws as affecting the general industry of the empire, yet it was easier to stifle inquiry than to prevent the effect of the laws; and when the Chancellor of the Exchequer came to bring forward the budget, he had a very different account to give of the state of the finances from that which had been anticipated in the preceding year. He calculated the income of the country at £45,550,000, and the expenditure at £44,715,000. But this surplus, even if it should arise, disappeared before the interest of the loan for the negro emancipation indemnity, which amounted to £1,000,000 in all for this year, leaving not only no surplus, but a probable deficiency of £170,000. Thus, in addition to the many disastrous effects of the emancipation of the negroes in the colonies themselves, there is to be set down to the charge of that measure the termination of the surplus, and commencement of the dispute between the rural and urban interests, which thereafter went on continually increasing till it worked out a total change in the financial and commercial systems of the country.[2]

[2] Ann. Reg. 1835, 358.

The manly and independent stand which the House of Peers had made against the revolutionary projects which had been forced upon the Ministry by their adherents among the English boroughs and the Irish Catholics,

CHAP. XXXVI.

1835.

22.

Mr O'Connell's crusade against the House of Lords.

while it greatly raised them in the estimation of all thinking men, apart from the whirl of party ambition, excited the utmost indignation among the Radicals over the whole empire, not less impatient than any Eastern sultan of any restraint upon their wishes. Mr O'Connell took the lead in the agitation got up to inflame this feeling, and he made a progress, after the rising of Parliament, through all the great towns of the north of England and Scotland to excite the people on the subject. His language and designs may be judged of by the speech which he addressed to a very large assemblage of the working classes at Manchester. "If there were only one house of parliament, a majority of that house, perhaps a faction, would become the rulers of the entire nation. I am therefore for two houses, but they must be two honest houses. What title have the Lords to legislate for us? They have two, the present law and the constitution. But they have been changed, and *why should they not be changed again?* What are the Lords? Hereditary legislators! Because the father was supposed to be a good legislator, the son is supposed to be so equally. Why, if a man applied to you to make a coat, your question would be, Are you a tailor?—No, I am not, but my father was a tailor. Is there a single man among you who would employ a hereditary tailor of this kind? That principle of common sense will go abroad among the Lords. Whether hereditary legislators or tailors, we'll have none of the botchers at all. Who is sending this principle abroad? The Lords themselves, because they are showing themselves the arrantest botchers that ever spoiled a job of work. They shall never get a receipt till they have paid the last farthing. If they delay, they may have to pay a little interest upon it. The question is, whether you are to have 170 masters or not,—170 irresponsible masters, the people looking for redress of their grievances, and looking for it in vain. Will you endure that any gang or banditti, I care not by what name you call them,

should treat them and you contemptuously? In one word, I call them rogues. *We must put down the House of Lords.* Ye are miserable minions of power. Ye have no choice for yourselves till that house be thoroughly reformed. Let the King retain his prerogative of raising men to that rank and station in which they may be eligible. Let every 200,000 men in Great Britain and Ireland select one Lord from this list; that will give you 130 for the 24,000,000: let them be re-eligible every five years, and you will have a steady Chamber."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1835, 369, 370.

23. Spread of these extreme opinions among the operatives in towns, and the Radicals in the Commons.

These extreme opinions were at this time by no means confined to the arch-agitator, his obsequious Irish followers, or the noisy multitudes whom he addressed in England and Scotland. They were shared also by a large proportion, certainly a great majority, of the working classes in all the great towns, upon whom the doctrine had long been sedulously inculcated that the House of Peers was a body of interested aristocrats, destitute of public spirit, incapable of improvement, whose sole function was to obstruct, for their own selfish purposes, every plan of social or political amelioration.* Nor was the legislature itself by any means free from such doctrines. On the contrary, Mr Roebuck, on 2d September,

* "While we strongly deprecate the unmanly and submissive manner in which the Ministry and the Commons have, bare-headed, bowed to the refractory Lords, we are proud to observe that the King, at the prorogation of Parliament, acknowledged the advantage of responsible governments. His Majesty, in his speech, acknowledged that peace and union can alone be secured where the people and his Ministers have bound themselves to establish responsibility in every department of the State, and as the Lords have hitherto displayed a most astounding anomaly in this enlightened age by retaining the right to legislate by birth or court favour, and being thereby rendered irresponsible, it follows that it *must be cut down as a rotten encumbrance*, or be so cured as to be made of some service to the State as well as amenable to the people. It follows that the Commons also must be rendered still more responsible to the nation at large by the further extension of the suffrage, and by abridging the term of Parliament, ere the hands of the King and his Ministers can be so strengthened as to perform effectually the good work of *necessary destruction* and salutary reform."—Address of the Non-franchised Inhabitants of Glasgow to Mr O'Connell, "the first Man of the Age, the champion of civil and religious liberty all over the world," Oct. 17, 1835; *Ann. Reg.*, 1835, 369, 370.

CHAP. XXXVI. 1835.

announced his intention, early in the following session, of introducing a bill taking away from the House of Lords their constitutional veto upon all measures of legislation, and substituting for it a suspensive power, so that when a bill passed the Commons, and was rejected by the Lords, if it should again pass in the same session of Parliament, and receive the royal assent, it should become the law of the land. Mr Rippon, member for Gateshead, gave notice of a motion to remove the bishops and archbishops from the Upper House; and Mr Hume, of a motion to inquire into the number and privileges of the House of Lords, with a view to render them responsible like the Commons. Finally, Mr O'Connell, after his crusading progress against the House of Peers, was invited to the Lord-lieutenant's table in Dublin, and received there! These ominous manifestations excited so strong a feeling of dissatisfaction among the Conservative portion of the electoral body in Great Britain, that in two elections which took place at this time, one for Devizes and the other for the county of Northampton, the ministerial candidate in both cases was defeated, though, in the latter instance, he was Lord Milton, eldest son of Earl Fitzwilliam.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1835, 366, 371, 372.

24. (Great apprehensions of the Ministerialists.)

These repeated defeats, especially in the county elections, excited great apprehensions in the ministerial ranks, who with reason dreaded a destruction in a few years of their trifling majority in the House of Commons, while they knew, by dear-bought experience, that an overwhelming majority in the House of Peers was decidedly hostile. These alarms were forcibly expressed by Sir W. Molesworth, the member for East Cornwall, who was closely connected with the *Westminster Review*, and spoke the language of that section of politicians in seconding a motion of Mr Grote in favour of the ballot, on 2d June. The opinions then expressed were the more worthy of notice, that both these gentlemen were very able men,—the one destined to be a cabinet minister, the other the

learned and celebrated historian of Greece. "Ministers," said Sir W. Molesworth, "ought now to be aware of the mortifying fact, that amongst the gentry of England their party was decidedly in a minority; that the great majority of the aristocracy of the landed gentry, and all the clergy to a man, were their determined and irreconcilable foes, who would spare no efforts, who would use every species of undue influence and intimidation, to compass their destruction. If they left their supporters exposed to the tender mercies of the Tory party, they would by degrees be ejected, like Lord John Russell, from the representation of all the counties in England. Did they remember that their friends had been ejected, and replaced by their enemies, in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Denbighshire, Derbyshire, Devonshire South, Essex South, Gloucestershire West, Hampshire South, Lancashire South, Leicestershire South, Lincolnshire, Norfolk East, Northamptonshire South, Shropshire North, Suffolk East, Suffolk West, Surrey East, Surrey West, Warwickshire South; and that within these few weeks they had again been dismissed from Devonshire, Inverness-shire, and Staffordshire? Did they remember their fatal losses in the counties in the late election? Did they prefer to be utterly annihilated as a party in the house, rather than have the ballot? If so, their fate was nigh at hand, and they would well merit it." To the same purpose Mr C. Buller, member for Liskeard, and a leading Whig, said, that "feeling as the Liberal party did, that the majority of those enjoying wealth, property, and influence was against them, it was essential that they should endeavour to excite a fervid feeling in the breasts of the multitude, and therefore it was that they were obliged to resort to popular agitation to counterbalance the force that was marshalled against them."[1] To the same purpose it was asserted in the *Edinburgh Review*, that the great majority of persons having above £500 a-year were against the Liberal party—a curious commen-

[1] Parl. Deb. xxviii., 497, 510; Ann. Reg. 1835, 345, 346.

CHAP. XXXVI. 1835.

tary on the preamble of the Reform Bill, that it was intended to extend the franchise to a fair proportion of the property and intelligence of the country.

25. Great, though gradual, creation of Whig peers.

Government, however, did not share the apprehensions of their extreme Liberal followers as to the disappearance of their majority in the House of Commons. They knew too well the decided preponderance of the borough members in that house, aided by the Liberals of Scotland and the Catholics of Ireland, to have any serious fears of defeat in the Lower House. But the recent great majorities against them in the House of Lords rendered it painfully evident that they stood on the most precarious footing in that assembly; and that any casual discomfiture in the Commons would be followed in all probability by a vote, in the Lords, of no confidence, and their entire ejection from office. Their situation also was one of extreme difficulty, exposed as they were to a constant pressure from without, and demands for further organic change from their Radical and Catholic supporters, essential to their majority in Parliament, which were at least as distasteful to the old Whig families as they were to the most inveterate Tory in the kingdom. In addition to this, recent events had brought the two houses of parliament into open collision, and the cry for peerage reform was becoming as general among the Catholics and Radicals as ever that for parliamentary reform had been. In these circumstances the danger was imminent that Government would be brought to a dead lock, and fresh convulsions arise from the obstacles thrown in the way of further changes by a fixed majority, independent of popular control, in the Upper House. Pressed on all sides with these difficulties, Lord Melbourne judged—and judged, as matters stood, wisely—that it was indispensable to bring the House of Lords more into harmony with the majority in the House of Commons; and this he proposed to accomplish, not, as in 1832, by marching sixty or eighty new peers at once into the House of Lords, but by the succes-

sive creation of single peers or small batches, in a way not likely to excite attention, but quite as effectual in the end, and at no remote period, in changing the ruling majority in the Upper House. So steadily has this system been pursued by successive Liberal administrations, that since 1830 upwards of a hundred new peers, almost all of them of Liberal politics, have been added to the House of Lords; and by this means not only has the Tory majority, created by the long tenure of office by the Conservatives before that time, been effectually overcome, but the balance rather cast the other way. To this cause the subsequent smooth working of the constitution, and the successful passage of Free Trade and other Liberal measures through the House of Lords, are mainly to be ascribed.*

* PEERS CREATED SINCE 1830, AND PROMOTIONS SINCE THAT TIME.

By Whigs.

At King William's Coronation in 1831,—	
Dukes,	2
Marquesses,	3
Earls,	5
Barons,	20
Subsequently created in his reign,	22
Since then,—	
Earl of Leicester,	1
Duke of Roxburghe,	1
Lord de Mauley,	1
Lord Sudeley,	1
Lord Wrottesley,	1
Lord Methuen,	1
Lord Lismore,	1
Lord Kintore,	1
Lord Carew,	1
Lord Lovelace,	1
Lord Zetland,	1
Marquess of Normanby,	1
Lord Vaux of Harroden,	1
Lord Beauvale,	1
Lord Furnival,	1
Lord Stanley of Alderley,	1
Lord Stuart de Decies,	1
Lord Wenlock,	1
Lord Lurgan,	1
Lord De Freyne,	1
Lord Leigh,	1
Lord Colborne,	1
Lord Ponsonby,	1
Lord Dunfermline,	1
Lord Camoys,	1
Carry forward,	77

Brought forward,	77
Lord Montcagle,	1
Lord Auckland,	1
Lord Keane,	1
Lord Tralow,	1
Lord Beaumont,	1
Lord Hastings,	1
Lord Stair,	1
Lord Kenmare,	1
Lord Campbell,	1
Lord Vivian,	1
Lord Congleton,	1
Duke of Norfolk, and eldest son,	1
Earl of Gosford, do.,	1
Lord Barham,	1
Lord Segrave,	1
Lord Sydenham,	1
Lord Dalhousie,	1
Lord Strafford,	1
Lord Cottenham,	1
Lord Gough,	1
Lord Dartrey,	1
Lord Milford,	1
Lord Elgin,	1
Lord Clandeboye,	1
Lord Edderbury,	1
Lord Londesborough,	1
Lord Overstone,	1
Lord Truro,	1
Lord Cranworth,	1
Lord Broughton,	1
Lord Aveland,	1
Lord Wensleydale,	1
	109

CHAP. XXXVI.

1835.

26. State of the West Indies.

The attention of the empire was anxiously turned this year to the West Indies, as the effects of the new apprentice system, which came into operation in the preceding year, were now for the first time to be brought to light. The results were anything but favourable. The season had been uncommonly favourable, and the crop abundant; notwithstanding which, there was a falling-off of 4444 hogsheads, or about a sixteenth, from the quantity shipped in the preceding year. The produce shipped was 68,000 hogsheads, instead of 72,444. The Jamaica House of Assembly said, in their Address to the Governor on the meeting of their provincial parliament: "It would be a great comfort to us were we able to discover any possible hope that succeeding crops will improve, our decided conviction being that each succeeding crop will be progressively worse. That in some few cases the apprentices do work for wages is true, but we deeply regret to say that, from our personal experience of the past year, the opposite disposition so immeasurably preponderates that no confidence whatever can be placed in voluntary labour. We deeply regret our inability to join in the favourable anticipations entertained by your excellency of the success of the new system. But knowing, as we do, the prevailing reluctance evinced by the people to labour, the thefts, negligences, and outrages of every description that are becoming of such frequent occurrence; seeing large por-

By Tories.

Earl of Lowther,	1	Brought forward,	6
Earl of Derby,	1	Lord Hardinge,	1
Lord Hill,	1	Lord St Leonards,	1
Lord Ellesmere,	1	Lord Raglan,	1
Lord Gough,	1	Lord Stratford de Redcliffe,	1
Lord Ellenborough,	1		10
Carry forward,	6		

It is but justice to the Whigs to say that the Tories had set them the example, for they had avenged themselves for their long exclusion from office for seventy years before 1784, by a liberal creation of peers since that time, and down to 1830. At the accession of George III. the Peers were only 180, and at the arrival of Mr Pitt to power in 1784 they were 220; and on the return of the Whigs to power in 1830 they were about 410, exclusive of the elected peers of Scotland and Ireland.—BURKE'S *Pecrage.*

tions of our neglected cane-fields overrun with weeds, and a still larger part of our pasture-lands returning to a state of nature; seeing, in fact, desolation already overspreading the very face of the land,—it is impossible for us, without abandoning the evidence of our own senses, to entertain favourable anticipations, or to divest ourselves of the painful conviction that the progressive and rapid deterioration of property will continue to keep pace with the apprenticeship, and that the termination of it must, unless strong preventive measures are applied, complete the ruin of the colony." So distasteful was this address to the governor, that he said, on receiving it, that its style precluded him from making any other reply but acknowledging its receipt.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1835, 378-380.

27. Commencement of the troubles in Canada.

This year witnessed the commencement of those unhappy troubles in Canada, which two years after rose to so formidable a height, and materially impeded, though happily only for a short time, the progress of that noble colony. The time at which they arose, the inhabitants among whom they were chiefly prevalent, and the objects to which the demands of the malcontents were directed, leave no room for doubt that they were prompted by that combination of Romish ambition with democratic encroachment, which at that period so violently shook the mother country, and from which the leaders of the combined parties anticipated a speedy and entire change both in Church and State. The lower province had for some time been in a state of great ill-humour, chiefly in consequence of the efforts of the Catholic priests in it, where the persons of their persuasion were five-sixths of the people, to excite disaffection against their Protestant governors. Such was the irritation which prevailed, that it was only increased by the dissolution which took place in August 1834; and the Cabinet, conceiving that the dissatisfaction was in part at least owing to personal dislike at the governor, recalled Lord Aylmer, the governor of the province, and Lord Amherst was nominated by Sir R. Peel as his

CHAP. XXXVI. 1835.

successor. In the mean time, such was the discontent which prevailed at Government refusing to agree to a bill for rendering the upper house elective, according to O'Connell's demands in Great Britain, that the Lower House of Assembly *refused to vote the supplies;* the salaries of all the public servants ceased to be paid, and the governor, under the direction of Mr Spring Rice, advanced £31,000 from the military chest to meet the most pressing demands. The Assembly, however, were by no means so niggardly to themselves as they were to the public servants of the State, for one of their first acts was to vote £18,000 for payment of their own salaries and current expenses. This vote the governor required time to consider, and as the opposition upon this withdrew, the Assembly was adjourned upon the ground that a quorum did not remain to carry on the public business.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1835, 380-382; Mart. ii. 377, 378.

28. Demands of the discontented in both the provinces.

With a view of appeasing the colony, which had now, both in the upper and lower province, become extremely discontented, Lord Melbourne, soon after his restoration to power, sent out Lord Gosford as governor, with a board of commissioners, of whom he was chairman, to inquire into the grievances which were complained of. It was soon discovered that the grounds of complaint were of an entirely different character in the lower and the upper province. The preference shown to the English language over the French, and to the British settlers over the French, with the accumulation of offices in the persons of the former, the interference of government in elections, and the undue delay in sanctioning or considering bills, formed the chief grounds of complaint in the former province; and they were urged almost entirely by persons speaking the French language, and of French descent. They insisted also, that the Upper Assembly, corresponding to the House of Peers, instead of being, as heretofore, appointed by the Crown, should be elective. The demands of the upper province were different, and were directed chiefly to obtaining a control of the public monies and accounts; and the dis-

contented in it were for the most part found among the numerous new settlers who had come out during the general fervour originating in the reform movement. Thus it was easy to see that different agencies were at work in the two provinces, and the discontent originated in the want of different things. The influence of Rome was exerted in the lower province to add to the difficulties of the English Government, and aid O'Connell's agitation and crusade against the House of Lords in the British Islands; and accordingly it was directed to rendering the Upper Assembly elective, and obtaining the admission of Catholics into offices of trust and power under the government. The influence of the reform passion was felt in the upper province, and accordingly the demands of the leaders of its agitation were chiefly directed to the old Anglo-Saxon object of getting the control of the supplies.[1]

[1] Mart. ii. 378, 379; Ann. Reg. 1835, 283, 284.

29. Opening of the Assembly, and demands of the Opposition.

To appease these discontents by conceding such of them as appeared to be reasonable, and suited to the growing strength and intelligence of the colony, Lord Gosford stated in his speech to the Assembly, on its opening in November 1835, that he was authorised to sanction the grants voted in the last session for their own expenses, and which Lord Aylmer had reserved for consideration; and he made at the same time the important announcement: "I have received the commands of our most gracious Sovereign to acquaint you that his Majesty is disposed to place under the control of the representatives of the people all public monies payable to his Majesty or to his officers in this province, whether arising from taxes or from any other source. The accounts, which will be submitted to your examination, show the large arrears due as salaries to public officers, and for the other ordinary expenditure of the government, and I earnestly request of you to pass such votes as may effect the liquidation of these arrears, and provide for the maintenance of the public servants pending the inquiry by the commissioners." This great concession, however, was far from satisfying

CHAP. XXXVI. 1835.

the demands of the Canadian reformers, directed as they now were by foreign and sacerdotal influence. They said, accordingly, in reply: "The great body of the people of this province, without distinction, consider the extension of the elective principle, and its application to the constitution of the Legislative Council in particular, the repeal of the acts passed in Great Britain on matters concerning the internal government of the province, as fully within the jurisdiction of the provincial parliament, as well as the privileges conferred by such acts, and the full and unrestrained enjoyment, on the part of the legislature and of this house, of their legislative and constitutional rights, as being essential to the prosperity and welfare of his Majesty's faithful subjects in Canada, as being necessary to insure their future confidence in his government, and their future welfare and contentment under it, and to remove the causes which have been obstacles to it." They received with pleasure the grant of a control over the public accounts, but avoided any promise to repay the £31,000 advanced from the military chest. This state of things did not augur much harmony in their future deliberations between the Government and the Assembly, and this soon appeared. One of their first acts was to insert in the public accounts the agent's bill for Mr Roebuck's salary, the parliamentary agent for the Assembly in the House of Commons; and the governor's council having declined to sanction this charge, the Assembly passed it at their own hands without the intervention of the government. Thus ill-humour and hasty proceedings prevailed on both sides, and it was easy to see that matters were fast hastening to that point when concession on the part of Government would inflame rather than allay the public discontents, and that a violent collision was unavoidable.[1]

[1] Mart. ii. 377, 378; Ann. Reg. 1835, 385, 386.

The general prosperity of the manufacturing and commercial interest, contrasted with the deep depression of the agricultural which had distinguished the two preceding

years, continued through the whole of 1835 and 1836, and formed the subject of marked allusions in the Speech from the Throne, when Parliament opened on the 14th February in the following year. The King said, in his speech on that occasion, with truth and discrimination: "The state of the commerce and manufactures of the United Kingdom is highly satisfactory. I lament that any class of my subjects should still suffer distress; and the difficulties which continue to be felt in important branches of agriculture may deserve your inquiry, with a view of ascertaining whether there are any measures which Parliament can advantageously adopt for the alleviation of their pressure."[1]

30. Opening of Parliament, and King's speech. Feb. 14, 1836.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1836, 2, 3; Parl. Deb. xxxi. 4, 5.

The precarious condition of Ministers, depending for their majority in the House of Commons entirely upon the support of the Irish Catholics and English Dissenters, stamped, as a matter of necessity, a peculiar character upon their legislative measures, which were entirely directed to relieve the grievances or gratify the wishes of these parties. The first field which presented itself, and which was recommended for consideration in the Speech from the Throne, was the state of the Irish corporations. These establishments, in addition to the numerous abuses which had been so much complained of in the English boroughs, and which had led to the Municipal Bill of the preceding year, were affected also by a great variety of evils which were peculiarly their own. Thus their reform was calculated at once to remedy more serious corruptions, and introduce more extensive changes in the balance of political parties, than that of the English boroughs had done. These corporations had been established chiefly by James I., as so many legislative outposts to secure the English command of the country. As a necessary consequence, they were all Protestant, and Catholics were excluded from them all. In a word, they had been planted in the Irish wilderness, like blockhouses in the forests of the Far West, to form so many

31. The state of the Irish corporations.

CHAP. XXXVI. 1836.

rallying-points to the Protestant settlers in the island, and they were in general surrounded by a vast majority of Catholics. In these circumstances, the extension of municipal institutions, similar to those established in Great Britain, to Ireland, was not merely a social but a political question. It was mixed up in fearful proportions with religious dissension, and tended to convert the fortresses erected for the defence of one faith into the strongholds from which it was to be assailed. Nevertheless, the thing required to be attempted, for after popular government of boroughs had been established in Great Britain, it was impossible to refuse it to the sister island; and if such a refusal had been attempted, it would only have added another to the many real and supposed grievances of the Emerald Isle.

32. Government plan, and abuses complained of.

The first step of Government on this question was to issue a commission to inquire into the condition of the Irish boroughs, as they had done in regard to those in England. This commission, as might have been anticipated, reported strongly against the Irish corporations, even more so than had been done against the English.* There could be no doubt that though such commissions in general proceed on *ex parte* evidence, and studiously avoid summoning any one who is likely to thwart their preconceived opinions or secret instructions, yet in this instance their report was in the main well founded. Pro-

* "That the incorporations provided no means, and contained no constituency by which the property, the wishes, and the interests of the whole local community might secure a fair representation in the corporate body; that in many towns there was no recognised commonalty; that in others where it existed it was entirely disproportioned to the inhabitants, and consisted of a very small portion, of an exclusive character, not comprising the mercantile interests, nor representing the wealth, intelligence, or respectability of the town. The corporations, and not without reason, were looked on by the great body of the inhabitants with suspicion and distrust, as having interests distinct from and adverse to those of the general community, whom they thus studiously excluded from any participation in the municipal government. Their members frequently consisted of the relations and adherents of particular families or individuals, and the principles of their association, and those

ceeding on it, Mr O'Loughlan, the Irish Attorney-General, introduced a bill for the better regulation of Irish corporations. He stated, that though a great many corporations had perished since the Union, there were still sixty in full vigour, and eleven in a state of decay. These seventy-one corporations included within their territories 900,000 persons, while the number of corporators was only 13,000. Of these 13,000, no less than 8000 were to be found in four of the larger boroughs, leaving only 5000 corporators for the remaining sixty-seven corporations, containing above 500,000 inhabitants. The paucity of these corporators was not redeemed by their character. Since 1792, the corporations had been nominally open to Roman Catholics, but not more than 200 have been admitted. In Dublin they proceed on the avowed principle of excluding not only all Roman Catholics, but the great majority of Protestants, of wealth, respectability, or intelligence. The sheriffs of that city are chosen by the corporate body, and they always put persons connected with the incorporation first upon the list, and it was so managed that the Catholics were always in a minority. In a word, the management of corporations, and the administration of justice in their hands, is nothing but a tissue of injustice, partisanship, and corruption.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1836, 21, 23; Parl. Deb. xxxi. 496-499.

"The remedy proposed for these evils is to put corporations under effective popular control, as has already

which regulated admission and exclusion, had rarely any connection with the common benefit of the district, or the wishes of the inhabitants. In by far the greater number of the close corporations, the persons composing them were merely the nominees of the patron or proprietor of the borough; while in those which apparently were more enlarged, they were admitted and associated in support of some political interest, most frequently at variance with the majority of the inhabitants. The corporations have long been unpopular, and objects of suspicion. As at present constituted, they are in many instances of no service to the community, in others injurious, in all insufficient and inadequate for the proper purposes and ends of such institutions. The public distrust in them attaches to their officers and nominees, and the result is a failure of respect for, and confidence in, the ministers of justice and police."—*Report of Irish Corporation Commissioners*, Nov. 4, 1835; *Ann. Reg.* 1836, 20, 21.

CHAP. XXXVI.

1836.

been done in England and Scotland. In seven of the larger boroughs, comprising Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Kilkenny, Belfast, Galway, Waterford, it is proposed to make the municipal coextensive with the parliamentary occupants, and to include every £10 occupant. This rule, however, if applied to the smaller boroughs, would give much too small a constituency. In these boroughs it has already been provided, by an act passed in 1828, that all householders inhabiting £5 houses and upwards shall have a vote for paving and lighting commissioners; and it is proposed to apply in them the same principle to the municipal franchise. In the larger boroughs there will be a division into wards. The aldermen are to be elected, not by the councillors, but the inhabitants, and to consist of those who at the poll have the greatest number of votes; one half of the councillors and aldermen to go out of office every three years. A commission of the peace to be issued to the smaller boroughs, if the Lord-lieutenant saw cause; in the larger, the mayor for the time being to be the magistrate of the borough. In the seven larger boroughs, the council to elect sheriffs, subject to the approval of the Lord-lieutenant; the management and control of the whole corporate funds and patronage to be vested in the town-council. There is only one way in which it is possible to pacify Ireland, and that is to promote a real union through an amelioration of her institutions, by treating her fairly, by giving her equal privileges and equal rights with England. Deny her that, and the Union is at an end." [1]

33. Argument in support of the bill.

[1] Parl. Deb. xxxi. 496-504; Ann. Reg. 1836, 23, 24, 39.

On the other hand, it was argued by Sir R. Peel, Lord Lyndhurst, and Lord Stanley: "The greater part of the corporations in Ireland, between forty and fifty in number, have been erected by James I., avowedly as guardians of the Protestant interests, and to favour the spread of the Protestant religion. This bill, whatever may be said to the contrary, and under whatever colours

34. Argument against the bill.

it may be veiled, goes to annihilate the ancient corporation system of Ireland, and vest the management of the boroughs and their extra property in different hands, and persons actuated, both in civil and religious concerns, by entirely opposite interests and wishes. By this bill there will be no more connection between the former and the new corporations, than between the old and the new departmental system in France. It may be necessary to make such a change, but it is in vain to deny that it amounts to complete revolution, so far as both property and influence are concerned, in the whole boroughs of Ireland. It is not denied that the present system has become a cover for many abuses, and has, by the lapse of time, become unsuitable to the circumstances of society; and it may at once be conceded that it would be unwise to attempt to maintain it any longer.

35. Continued.

"What system, then, should be proposed in its place; for some system there must be, and everything depends on the principles on which it is to be founded. The plan now proposed, after destroying the whole existing corporations in Ireland, proposes to erect them of new in fifty-four towns in Ireland, in forty-seven of which the council are to be chosen by a household suffrage of £5. With regard to population, the bill descends very low; for in the town of Middleton, with 2037 inhabitants, and Belturbet, with 2067, there are to be four aldermen and twelve councillors; and the bill also gives power to the Lord-lieutenant to apply it to any town in that country, without reference to the amount of its population. This power might be exercised on a petition of two or three discontented inhabitants. The report of the commissioners bore that there were 126 towns in Ireland, with a population of 2000 each. It might be presumed that they would all be erected into boroughs, and this might even be done with an hundred villages more, with a population of 1000 souls, on the application of two or three

CHAP. XXXVI. 1836.

ambitious persons desirous of obtaining situations of power or emolument in them. These little boroughs would all have the power of making rules and by-laws at variance with each other; and the station of the persons by whom these Liliputian legislatures are to be elected, may be judged of by the admission in the bill, that recourse must be had to the £5 occupants to make up the municipal constituency.

36. Continued.

"Serious as these evils are, they are as nothing compared to those which are connected with the administration of justice. In every corporate town there is to be a mayor, who is to be *ex officio* a justice of the peace, owing his power, not to commission from the Lord-lieutenant, but to the simple election of the householders. This is not the case in England, where the corporate magistrates, as such, have no judicial power; and it is not a little remarkable, that while the report of the commissioners states it as one of the evils of the corporate system in Ireland that the borough magistrates are independent of all control from the Crown, this bill proposes to perpetuate that very evil. Will these evils be remedied by giving to popular bodies the election of these justices? will not, on the contrary, their election, from which such important consequences are to flow, be the occasion of fresh discord and animosity? First, there will be the registration of the voters, then the election of the town-councillors, and then the election of the mayor, aldermen, and town-clerks! What a scene, with such a state of things present! How truly has it been said, it will render these little boroughs normal schools of agitation. It is said the sheriff, under the old system, showed undue preference to the corporators, and put them first on the panel of jurors: will the new sheriff, acting under the pressure from without, be more scrupulous, or less partial to those who have elected him? What possible objection can there be to giving the appointment of these

sheriffs to the Lord-lieutenant? He is to have, under a bill pending in Parliament, the appointment of the police force in every county and town in Ireland, on the preamble that such unity of government is essential to its due action. On what principle is the police of 126 towns to be taken out of his hands, and vested in those of the £5 householders?

"Then, as to the corporate property, it is very considerable, and has apparently been well managed, for its income in all the boroughs is £61,397, its expenditure £57,279, and the debt charged on it only £133,000. These revenues are derived from two sources, lands and tolls. These are to be vested absolutely in the new corporations, subject only to the restriction of not lowering the tolls when they are pledged for debt. That is impolitic; for the true way to increase these towns is not to authorise them to borrow money on the tolls and spend it on corporation purposes, but to induce them to lower or take off the tolls altogether, and thereby attract trade to their markets. In short, the proposed bill goes to eradicate one set of evils only to rear up another set of the same description still more formidable, and the last state of matters will be worse than the first. The true way to legislate, in order to remove the admitted evils of the present system, is not to create a new system, creative, in the end, of the same or greater evils, merely because a similar system has been established, but to consider by which system equal laws and equal privileges may best be secured to all. Is this to be done by merely rendering the party hitherto servient the dominant power? What does it signify by whom undue influence is exercised—whether by landlord or priest? Mr O'Connell has said, and said truly, that every one knows that corporate reform will render the English boroughs 'normal schools of agitation.' Will they prove less so in Ireland? We call upon you, therefore, knowing that these annual

37. Concluded.

CHAP. XXXVI. 1836.

elections will engender strife, and increase the already heated state of party feelings in Ireland, as you value the integrity and security of this great empire, not to lend your sanction to the establishment in Ireland of normal schools, in which the science of agitation is to be taught; and, above all, not to make the graduates in those schools, and the professors of that science, the chosen instruments for leading the civil force, and for dispensing public justice."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxxi. 1050, 1076; Ann. Reg. 1836, 26-31.

38. The bill is carried in the Commons. March 28.

In accordance with these views, Sir R. Peel did not divide the House upon the second reading of the bill, thereby admitting the principle that the old corporations should be abolished; but in committee Lord Francis Egerton moved, with his concurrence, that "the committee should be empowered to make provision for the abolition of corporations in Ireland, and for such arrangements as should be necessary for their abolition, and for securing the efficient and impartial administration of justice, and the peace and good government of cities and towns in Ireland." The object of this was to vest the government of boroughs, so far as the administration of justice and direction of the police force was concerned, in the Lord-lieutenant, or those acting under him, not the persons elected by the constituencies. Government resisted this, on the ground that it tended to do away with the principle of popular appointment and control, which was the leading principle of the bill, and establish an invidious distinction in this respect between Great Britain and Ireland. Lord F. Egerton's motion was lost by a majority of 307 to 64—a larger majority than Lord Melbourne's Ministry had yet got in the Commons; and the bill finally passed by a majority of 61—viz. 260 to 199—with the alteration only that the sheriffs in the larger boroughs were to be nominated by the Lord-lieutenant, not the town-councils.[2]

[2] Parl. Deb. xxxi. 1318, 1586, xxxii. 747; Ann. Reg. 1836, 33, 43.

The success of the bill was now secured so far as the Commons were concerned; but all parties were aware

that it was in the House of Lords that the real trial of strength on it would take place. It was read a second time in the Upper House without opposition; but in going into committee Lord Fitzgerald moved, as had been done in the Commons, for an instruction to the committee similar to Lord F. Egerton's, which had been thrown out in the Lower House. This motion was carried against Ministers by a majority of 84, the numbers being 203 to 119. Several other amendments, bringing the bill into the shape for which Sir R. Peel had contended in the House of Commons, were carried by majorities nearly as large; and the bill, as thus amended, was sent down to the Commons for their consideration. Lord John Russell, after observing that the bill, as now altered, contained little or nothing of what had been sent up from the Commons, seeing that out of 140 clauses 106 had been omitted or altered, and 18 new ones introduced, moved that the amendments of the Lords should be rejected, and the bill sent back to the Upper House. This was carried by a majority of 86, the numbers being 324 to 238. Upon the bill, however, backed by this large majority, coming back to the Lords, the motion of Lord Melbourne, that the amendments of the Commons should be taken into consideration, was lost by a majority of 99, the numbers being 220 to 121; and upon the bill returning, as amended by the Lords, to the Commons, Lord John Russell moved, and carried, that it should be taken into consideration that day three months—the usual mode of abandoning questions which were then set at rest for the present in both houses of Parliament.[1]

39. The bill is essentially altered in the Lords, and finally rejected in the Commons. May 9.

June 9.

June 27.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1835, 53, 64; Parl. Deb. xxxiv. 218, 963.

The other great party-question of the year produced a similar collision, threatening the most serious consequences between the two houses. The Irish Church Bill was introduced on 25th April by Lord Morpeth, being the same in substance with that which had been thrown out, by a majority of 97, in the Upper House; and on this occasion he promised a surplus of £100,000 a-year,

40. Irish Church Bill again passed in the Commons, and thrown out in the Lords. April 29.

CHAP. XXXVI. 1836. as likely to be ultimately available to the purposes of education. Lord Stanley and Sir R. Peel renewed their objections to those clauses in the bill which went to appropriate any part of the church property to temporal or general purposes. The bill on this occasion passed the Commons by a majority of only 26, the numbers being 290 to 264, the minority containing a majority of English members. Upon going to the Upper House, however, the appropriation clauses were rejected by a majority of July 25. 91, the numbers being 138 to 47, and the bill, as thus amended, was read a third time and passed. Upon the bill returning to the Commons, Lord John Russell started a question of privilege, on the ground of the Lords having incompetently interfered in the first instance with a money bill; and on this technical ground the bill, as amended, was thrown out by a majority of 29, or 260 to 231.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxxv. 241, 279, 515, and xxxiii. 1392, 1393; Ann. Reg. 1835, 66-110.

41. Perils of this state of collision between the two Houses.

Thus were the two houses brought into direct and fearful collision on the two vital questions of Corporate Reform and the Church Establishment in Ireland,—the natural and oft-predicted result of a majority of the Lower House being based on the boroughs and the representation of numbers, of the Upper on landed estates and the representation of property. It was obvious to all the world that this state of matters was in the highest degree perilous, and could not continue without putting the constitution, as established by the Reform Bill, in serious jeopardy. It went far to neutralise the whole advantage of the representative system, as any question taken up by the opposite sides as a party one, was sure to be carried in the one house and thrown out in the other; and this state of antagonism was not only confirming both in their preconceived opinions, but rendering the division between them, from the keenness of party conflict, every day more decided and irreparable. In the violent shock of the opposite parties which divided the empire, of which Ireland had become the battle-field, the real wants and

interests of its unhappy inhabitants were well-nigh forgotten; and the fatal illusion became daily more common, that its real evils were political, not social, and were to be removed by a change of ministry or political power, not by an alteration of material circumstances. Meanwhile the open antagonism of the two houses contributed greatly to strengthen the hands of the Radicals, who desired the abolition or entire change of the Upper, and furnished a plausible ground to O'Connell and the revolutionists for representing the House of Peers as the inveterate enemy of all reform, and its establishment on an entirely different footing as an indispensable preliminary to any real social improvement.

42. Increased agitation against the House of Lords.

The event soon showed that the Radicals would not be slow in taking advantage of the door thus opened to them for renewing and inflaming the agitation against the House of Lords. "Justice to Ireland," said O'Connell, "is our cry. England has reformed corporations; Scotland has them: Ireland applied for them; the House of Commons granted them; the House of Lords refused them. It was said, that as soon as the House of Commons was reformed, it would seek a quarrel with the House of Lords; that prophecy has been completely falsified. It is not the Commons who seek a quarrel with the Lords, but the Lords with the Commons. The House of Commons have been forbearing in the highest degree, in order to avoid a collision with the Lords; and the only consequence has been, that they have been defied and insulted. This is not to be endured. We have submitted for centuries to your oppression, but we will not submit to be insulted. We will do nothing violent or illegal; we will keep ourselves within the limits of the constitution, but we will agitate, agitate, agitate, until Ireland is organised, peaceably and legally, as it was before, and the result will be the same. I trust the people of England will respond to the cry, 'Justice to Ireland.' I defy the House of Lords to keep from Ire-

CHAP. XXXVI. 1836.

land municipal institutions. They may delay—withhold them they never will. I thank them for choosing this as the ground of collision between the two houses; I thank them for branding the people of Ireland as aliens; I thank them for thus barbing with insult their dart of death. The people of England must now join with the majority of the Lords in proclaiming the people of Ireland unfit for municipal institutions, or they must join with the majority of the Commons in forcing them from that obstinate body. Day after day the necessity of *another organic reform* is becoming more evident. The House of Commons has taken its part, the House of Lords has done the same; the collision has come; the people of England will determine between them, and may God defend the right."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1836, 62, 63.

43. Effects of this agitation in Ireland.

Upon the English people these violent declamations produced at this time very little impression; for the urban population, in whom such sentiments had formerly found a responsive voice, were so prosperous, from the low price of provisions and flourishing state of commerce, that they were entirely occupied with projects of gain; and the rural, who were suffering from those low prices, were so inherently loyal and peaceable that they could not be brought, from any external pressure, to join their voices to those of the decided enemies of the constitution. But the case was very different in Ireland. There the low price of agricultural produce, which had fallen rapidly from the influence of three fine harvests, acted with unmitigated force on a population wholly agricultural, and possessing no means of either living or paying their rents but by the disposal of the crops of the year.[2] Mr O'Connell took advantage of the universal distress produced by this circumstance to rouse and inflame the tithe agitation; and he founded on the Whig proposal to deduct 30 per cent from it in a tithe commutation, not as a reason for remaining quiet, but as an addi-

[2] Tooke on Prices, iv. 412.

tional one for agitating to get quit of the whole remainder. "I will take my instalment," said he in a letter to the electors of Kilkenny, "however small at any time, and *will then go on for the balance.* I realise for Ireland all I can get, and having got part, I am then better able to seek the rest. I heartily supported the Ministry of Lord Melbourne in their measures of tithe relief, not as giving all I wanted for the people of Ireland, but as giving a part, and establishing an appropriation principle which would necessarily produce much more." In pursuance of these principles, the anti-tithe agitation was everywhere renewed, and produced the most lamentable results. Payment of tithe, though only a fraction of a farthing, was everywhere resisted, by the injunctions of the priests, as a matter of conscience. The process-server was everywhere hunted and persecuted like a wild beast. If a sale of distrained cattle was attempted, intimidating mobs, surrounding the scene, prevented any one from purchasing. Some relief was for a time experienced by the clergy by the use of exchequer writs for the recovery of tithe instead of common process, but the respite proved evanescent. The exchequer writs, it was soon found, could be enforced only by the police or military; frequent collisions between them and the peasantry took place, attended by bloodshed on both sides. At Dunkennin in Tipperary two men were slain in October in attempting to post subpœnas in obedience to an exchequer writ; and while the country was agitated by these frightful scenes of disorder and violence, Mr Sheil gave the sanction of his name and abilities to the continuance of the system, and an exchequer collector had to be appointed before a trifling tithe due from his estate could be collected.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1836, 299-305; Mart. ii. 308, 309.

To carry into full and renewed operation this anti-tithe agitation, the old machinery devised by O'Connell, which had proved so effective in bringing about Catholic

CHAP. XXXVI.

1836.

44. Re-establishment of the Catholic Association.

emancipation, was again fully organised and everywhere established. Under his direction and that of Mr Sheil, the old association, under the new name of the "General Association," was re-established in Dublin, and branches set on foot in every town and parish in Ireland. The "General Association" held its meetings weekly, or oftener, in Dublin, at which reports were regularly read from the affiliated associations, or "registry clubs," in the provinces, and the amount of the "rent," or weekly contributions got from them, proclaimed and published. The topics which formed the staple of the speeches at these meetings, were the greatness, strength, and determination of Ireland; the seven centuries of English oppression; the necessity of thorough organisation, united action, and incessant agitation; and the magnitude of the results which might be expected from their continued action. The "registry" was especially urged upon their attention, and the necessity of straining every nerve to get Catholic electors on the roll, and keep Protestants off. Corporate reform—in other words, the command of all the boroughs in the kingdom—entire liberation from tithes and church-rates, were the advantages promised in the first instance from these measures; the repeal of the Union and abolition of the Protestant Establishment, the boon to be ultimately extorted from the Government. In this unparalleled and universally organised conspiracy, the leaders were the very men who had recently so furiously denounced the defensive Orange associations in the north of Ireland; and the Government, which remained a passive spectator of it, was the same which had, by means of a mere wish expressed from the Crown to one of the houses of Parliament, scattered all these Orange societies to the winds.[1]

1 Ann. Reg. 1836, 301-303.

But there never was a truer observation, than that all human evils have a limit; and that when the effects of existing institutions become excessively injurious, an

under-current sets in, destined in the end to correct them. This limit had now been reached in Ireland; this under-current was beginning to set in. The tide had turned, and though disasters unparalleled yet awaited her, that worst of all social evils, *blindness to the source from which they proceeded*, was beginning to be removed. The wretched condition of the Irish peasantry, under the combined effect of a redundant population, woeful cultivation, an absentee gentry, political agitation, low prices, and no means of emigration, had now reached such a height, that a few men of sense in the country began to see that their evils were *social*, not political, and that instead of being likely to be diminished by the vehement strife of parties, of which they had long been the victims, they were enhanced by it in the highest degree. Add to this that the inundations of Irish labourers into England and Scotland, in consequence of the miserably low wages which they alone could earn in their own country, and the total want of parochial relief there, had at length become so excessive, that the people of England were thoroughly aroused on the subject, and they loudly demanded that a country which enjoyed a rental of £13,000,000 a-year, divided between the landlords and the bondholders, should no longer be permitted to save itself from the burden of maintaining its own poor, by sending them forth in starving multitudes to overwhelm the neighbouring island.

45. Report recommending a Poor Law in Ireland.

So loud had these complaints become, that they had at length come to influence the legislature, and the committee which sat on the condition of the poor in 1828, had reported that the existing distress among the labouring poor of Great Britain was entirely owing to the influx of Irish poor, and would at once be removed if it could be stopped.[1] Such, however, was the vehemence of party strife, which soon after ensued from the dependence of the Catholic Relief and Reform Bills, that this all-

46. History of the measure, and causes of its long abeyance.

[1] Lords' Report, 1828, 7, 8.

CHAP. XXXVI. 1836.

important subject was for a time forgotten, or viewed in an entirely fallacious light. The leaders of the Liberal parties insisted that Protestant ascendancy was the sole cause of the distress, and that Catholic emancipation, municipal reform, and the appropriation of church property, were the suitable remedies. The political economists vociferated that the evils were mainly owing to a redundant population; that the dangerous tendency to increase would only be rendered more formidable by the relief of the suffering with which it was attended, and that the only wise course was to let poverty find its own level, and improvidence in marriage be checked by its attendant and inevitable consequences. Strong as the Liberals and political economists were at this period in the House of Commons, they could not have so long withstood the loud demands of the English people for a participation by Ireland in the burden of maintaining the poor, had they not been powerfully aided by Mr O'Connell, Mr Sheil, and the whole Catholic leaders, who, either dreading a diminution in the revenue of the Catholic Church, from the burden of poor-rates in Ireland, or fearing that the people, if relieved, and suffering less, would become not so susceptible of agitation for the purposes of sacerdotal ambition, cordially united in resisting any legal provision for the Irish poor. Father O'Malley having brought forward a motion in the General Association for a petition to Parliament to establish a poor-law, it was thrown out by Mr O'Connell and Mr Sheil. "Discuss poor-law," said the latter, "at such a moment! Away with such infatuation! The registry, the registry! —think of nothing but the registry."[1]

Dec. 21, 1836. [1] Ann. Reg. 1836, 307-312; Mart. ii. 312, 313.

The ruinously low prices of 1835, however, and the unbounded pauperism which was in consequence produced, overcame all these obstacles, and though a majority both of the Cabinet and the House of Commons adhered to their old ideas on the subject, yet they were, in a manner,

constrained to yield so far as to issue a commission to inquire into the condition of the poor in Ireland. Fortunately for the cause of humanity, and the ultimate interests of property in Ireland, the gentleman at the head of it was eminently qualified by his knowledge and abilities, as well as his ample experience of the English poor-laws under the new system, to discern rapidly the real state of the facts. His commission bore date 22d August 1836, and before Parliament rose he had collected such a body of information as was entirely decisive of the question, and threw more light on the subject than all the previous debates in Parliament put together had done. He began his report with these words, the truth of which subsequent events have too fully verified: "Ireland is now suffering under a circle of evils producing and reproducing each other: want of capital produces want of employment; want of employment, turbulence and misery; turbulence and misery, insecurity; insecurity prevents the introduction and accumulation of capital, and so on. Until the circle is broken, the evils must continue, and probably augment. The first thing to be done, is to give security that will produce and invite capital, and capital will give employment. But security of person and property cannot coexist with general destitution; so that, in truth, the drainage, reclamation, and profitable cultivation of bogs and wastes, the establishment of fisheries and manufactures, improvements in agriculture, and in the general condition of the country, and, lastly, the elevation of the great mass of the people in the social scale, seem to be more or less contingent upon establishing a legal relief for the destitute."* He

47. Mr Nicholl's Report, and its awful revelations. Aug. 21, 1836.

* "Capital has increased in Ireland, but population has increased still more; and therefore the great body of the people remain wretchedly poor notwithstanding the growth of public wealth. The extreme subdivision of land tends to the same result; the soil, fertile as it naturally is, becomes exhausted by incessant cropping. Except in the grazing districts, farms of a hundred acres are almost extinct. There being no legal provision for the destitute, and the subdivision of land into small holdings having destroyed the regular demand for

CHAP. XXXVI. 1836.

further reported, that no less than 2,385,000 persons in Ireland are in distress, and require relief, at least thirty weeks in the year; that themselves, their wives, and children, are absolutely compelled, however reluctant, to beg; and that mendicancy is the sole resource of the aged and impotent classes of the poor generally, whereby encouragement is given to idleness, imposture, and crime. All this obtained in a country where the landed rental was £13,000,000 a-year, being 250 per cent more than that of Scotland! Such was the state of a country, as brought out by their own commissioner, for which Government and its Liberal patriots had hitherto resisted all motions for a poor-rate, and for which they thought the appropriate remedies were, to divert £100,000 a-year from the Church to education purposes, and to give every starving householder paying £5 a municipal vote![1]

[1] Mr Nicholl's Report; Parl. Deb. xxxvi. 465; Ann. Reg. 1836, 308.

48. English Tithe Bill, and for registration of births, deaths, and marriages.

No sooner was this report printed, than Mr Scrope, M.P. for Stroud, brought forward a motion founded on it, for immediately coming to a decision on the point of a poor-law in Ireland, with a view to remedying the evils indicated. Government, however, having declared that they had the subject under consideration, and would be prepared to bring forward a measure next session, the

labour, *the occupation of a piece of ground is to the peasant the only means of subsistence.* Land to them is a necessary of life. A man cannot obtain a livelihood as a day-labourer; he must get a plot of ground on which to raise potatoes, or starve. Mendicancy is almost universal, and has therefore ceased to be disgraceful. It is not disreputable to appear wretchedly clothed, or without the decencies of life. Drunkenness is much more common among the Irish than in England. Notwithstanding the evident poverty of the people, the use of whisky and tobacco is excessive, and is said to be increasing. Much of the disorders and violence which prevail may be traced to this source. There is a depression of feeling, morally and personally, among the peasantry; they have no pride in, or desire to better their condition. Their desultory habits are very remarkable. They postpone any business, even the most necessary to the safety of their little crop, to a fair or a market. Their own work is soon done, or they think may be soon done; hence arises a total disregard of the value of time. At present, *the burden of the poor falls entirely upon the poor;* the higher classes generally, and the absentees entirely, *escape it altogether.* The poor at present are the sole providers for their own necessities each out of his little holding. Hence the agrarian outrages to prevent their being deprived of them; and hence the kind of famine which annually occurs in Ireland, between the going out of the old crop and the coming in of the new."—Mr Nicholl's *Report*, Nov. 23, 1836; *Ann. Reg.* 1836, pp. 63, 66.

matter was wisely left in their hands. In the mean time, the House of Commons passed several measures of unquestionable utility, and which, not being party questions, were agreed to by the Lords, and have been found by experience to be attended by the most beneficial results. The first of them was a bill for facilitating the commutation of tithes in England, a most important and praiseworthy object, and which goes far to remove those heartburnings inevitable, where tithe is liable to be drawn in kind in a community much divided in religious persuasion. The machinery by which this was to be effected, was borrowed from Sir R. Peel's bill on the same subject in the preceding year, and it passed without opposition. The second was a bill permitting the celebration of marriages by Dissenters, also taken from Sir R. Peel's bill of the preceding year, and which had met with their entire approbation. This change was highly proper; but the result has proved that, like many other grievances loudly complained of by particular sections of the community, it was practically felt by a very inconsiderable portion of them, for the marriages under the new form authorised by the act have never exceeded a few hundreds a-year. The third was a bill for the establishment of a general system for the registration of births, deaths, and marriages; a most important object, fraught, as the event has proved, with the most valuable results, and which has gone far to relieve the imputation under which Great Britain has so long laboured, of being behind the Continental nations in statistical information. Still more important to individuals, and the protection of innocence in the administration of justice, was a bill which at length, by the indefatigable exertions of Mr Ewart, passed both houses, allowing prisoners, in cases of felony in England, the benefit of counsel to address the jury—though the English system of giving the prosecutor the last word, if evidence was led by the prisoner, was still adhered to.[1] This just and humane change, like many of the other greatest improvements of English legislation during the

[1] Ann. Reg. 1835, iii. 152, 165, 166.

CHAP. XXXVI.

1836.

last half-century, was borrowed from the immemorial practice of Scotland.

49. Agricultural Distress Committee, and refusal of currency investigation.

The extreme depression of the agricultural interest, owing to the unparalleled low prices of the preceding year, compelled Government to give way on the subject; and Lord John Russell, on the 8th February, moved for and obtained a committee to inquire into the subject, on the very reasonable ground that, "whenever any great branch of national industry was materially depressed, it was the duty of Parliament to give a favourable consideration to the complaints of those engaged in it, even though there was no reason to think that the distress complained of could be relieved by parliamentary interference." A motion of Mr Attwood, however, for an instruction to the committee to inquire into the currency laws as affecting the interests of agriculture, was so unfavourably received by the house that it was withdrawn without a division. A motion brought forward by Lord Chandos, on the 27th April, that, in any reduction of taxation which might be practicable, the interests of agriculture should be specially attended to, was lost by a majority of 36, the numbers being 208 to 172. Sir R. Peel and Sir J. Graham both spoke against it, though it was admitted on all sides that the agricultural interest was alone in deep depression, while other interests in the community were in great prosperity, and that out of £8,000,000 taxes remitted during the last five years, £7,500,000 had gone to relieve the manufacturers or general consumers, and only £500,000 bore directly on the agricultural interest. Already it was evident that the balance of the landed and commercial interests had been entirely changed by the Reform Bill; and to the observant eye, these finance measures were fraught with the shadow of mighty changes at no distant period.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 219-231.

The general prosperity of the commercial and manufacturing classes, notwithstanding the distress of the agricultural, however, enabled the Chancellor of the Exchequer

to exhibit a more favourable account of the finances in his budget than had been anticipated in the preceding year. He stated the total income of the nation at £46,980,000, while its expenditure was £45,205,807, leaving a surplus of £1,774,193; which, however, would be reduced to £662,000 from the circumstance of £1,111,633 being absorbed by the interest on the West India loan, now become a permanent charge on the nation. The estimates included £434,000 for 5000 seamen additional voted last year; but there was a reduction of £154,000 on the charges for the army. The taxes taken off were very trifling, being chiefly on paper; and newspaper stamps were reduced from 4d. to 1d., which, upon a division, was carried by a majority of 241 to 208 against an amendment, that the surplus of the national income should be applied to a reduction of the duty on soap. If the division last mentioned indicated the ascendancy of the commercial interest over the landed in the House of Commons, it was no less significant of the fact, that the newspaper influence was becoming superior to both. As to the National Debt, for which Parliament had pledged itself in 1821 to keep up a real sinking fund of £5,000,000, it was of common consent ignored, and scarce anything was ever heard on the subject again in Parliament.[1]

50. The Budget.

[1] Parl. Deb. xxxi, 1230; Ann. Reg. 1836, 234, 250.

The grant of five thousand men for the navy, though strenuously objected to by Mr Joseph Hume and the Radicals in Parliament, was amply vindicated by the state of the British naval force, as compared with that of the neighbouring nations. It was stated on 4th March, in moving the naval estimates, by Mr Charles Wood on the part of Government: "From the best information Government could obtain, the French will have twelve sail of the line at sea during the ensuing summer. In 1834 the Russians had five sail of the line cruising in the Black Sea, and eighteen sail of the line, besides frigates, in the Baltic. Last summer two divisions, of nine sail of the line each, appeared together at a review

51. Deplorable weakness of the navy and army.

CHAP. XXXVI. 1836.

at Cronstadt; and after landing troops for a review at Kalisch, eleven sail of the line and seven frigates, besides smaller vessels, carrying crews amounting to more than 10,000 men, were cruising in the Baltic. During this same period there never were in our Channel ports *more than two frigates and a sloop, with crews amounting perhaps to* 1000 *men, disposable for sea at any one time, and that only for a day or two.* At the same time the whole line-of-battle ships this nation had afloat in every part of the world *did not exceed ten.*" Mr Hume contended that "the marine force was *too numerous.* So much was said about Russia, that gentlemen are afraid of a bugbear of their own creation." Sir R. Peel, however, supported the proposed addition of 5000 men, and it was carried without a division. The land forces voted for the year were 81,319 men, excluding India, of whom more than half were absorbed in the colonies. At this time France had 360,000 regular soldiers in arms, besides three times that number of national guards. Mr Hume, however, moved a reduction of this force by 5000 men. "England," said he, "is a civil, not a military country; and I wish to see an end put to that vicious system which has arisen out of our late wars, the maintenance of a preposterously large military force during peace. No real friend of the Government wished them to keep such a force. The Tories might. They were consistent men, attached by system to large establishments and great expense; but no well-wisher to the Government would support them to enlarge the present unnecessary force, or maintain it without diminution. I think that not merely 5000 *men, but* 15,000 *men, may be saved:* and as to Ireland, the putting down the Orange lodges will *render the presence of the military unnecessary.*" The reduction was only outvoted by a majority of 126 to 43.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxxi. 1231, and xxxii. 214-219; Ann. Reg. 1836, 251.

While such were the naval and military establishments of the country, when such formidable forces by sea and land were on foot in the neighbouring kingdoms, it could not be said that it was in ignorance of the state of the

52. Lord Dudley Stuart's remarkable speech on the Russian power in the East.

case, or for want of being told what danger threatened, and where it was most instant. On 19th February, Lord Dudley Stuart, in a debate on Eastern affairs, said in the House of Commons : " Russia has 50,000,000 subjects in Europe alone, exclusive of Asia, an army of 700,000 men, and a navy of eighty sail of line-of-battle ships and frigates, guided by the energy of a government of unmitigated despotism, at whose absolute and unlimited disposal stand persons and property of every description. These formidable means are constantly applied to purposes of territorial aggrandisement, and every new acquisition becomes the means of gaining others. Who can tell that the Hellespont may not be seized by Russia at any moment ? She has a large fleet in the Black Sea, full command of the mouths of the Danube, and of the commercial marine of Odessa and Trebizond ; in three days she may be at Constantinople from Sebastopol, and if once there, the Dardanelles will be so fortified by Russian engineers that she never can be expelled except by a general war. She could be in entire possession of these important Straits before any expedition could be sent from this country, even if such a thing could be thought of, against the enormous military force at the command of Russia. That Russia is determined to have the Dardanelles, is evident from the treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, by which she began by excluding the ships of all other nations. The effect of this treaty was to exclude any ship of war from these Straits, except with the permission of Russia. Russia might at any moment insist on the exclusion of our ships of war from the Dardanelles. Nay, she has already done so ; for when Lord Durham, going on his late embassy to the court of St Petersburg, arrived at the Dardanelles in a frigate, he was obliged to go on board the Pluto, an armed vessel without her guns, before he could pass the Straits ; and when he arrived at Sebastopol no salute was fired, and the excuse given was, that they did not know the Pluto from a merchant vessel. But both before and since Lord Durham went, Russian

CHAP. XXXVI. 1836.

ships of war, with their guns out and their streamers flying, passed through the Black Sea to the Dardanelles, and again through the Dardanelles to the Black Sea. Russia has now fifteen ships of the line and seven frigates in the Black Sea. Sebastopol is only three days' sail from the Hellespont. Turkey has no force capable of resisting such an armament; the forts of the Hellespont are incapable of defence against a land force, for they are open in rear. Russia might any day have 100,000 men in Constantinople, before England or France could even fit out expeditions to defend it." Lord Palmerston did not deny these facts, but resisted the motion for production of the correspondence in regard to the treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, which was negatived without a division.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxxi. 626, 679; Ann. Reg. 1836, 278, 279.

53. Increasing discontents of Canada, and settlement of the upper province.

The discontents of Canada, which had become serious in the preceding year, went on accumulating in this, and arrived at such a point as to threaten an immediate rupture. The demands of the opposite sides remained substantially the same, the colonists insisting for the right of electing the members of the upper house as well as the lower, and the entire control of the monies levied by Government in the colonies; the Government insisting that, as an indispensable preliminary, provision should be made for defraying the expense of the civil government of the colonies, and for repayment of the £30,000 which had been taken from the military chest to meet its most pressing necessities. The consequence of this state of division was, that there was soon open discord between the governors and the two Houses of Assembly, both in the upper and lower province. The Assembly in Upper Canada insisted, in addition to their other demands, upon having the "Executive Council," a sort of cabinet intended to assist the governor in his deliberations, subjected to their control, and the proceedings made public; a demand which was refused, as unsupported by the constitution of 1791. Upon this the whole council resigned, and a new

one was appointed. Instantly the reformers in the province were thrown into the most violent agitation; and the Assembly having become unmanageable, Sir Francis Head, the governor, dissolved it on the 28th. The event proved that he had not miscalculated the loyal feelings of the province in taking this step; for the returns proved that the tide there at least had turned, and that a decided majority of the people were opposed to the unconstitutional designs of the extreme democratic party. Out of sixty-two members returned, only eighteen belonged to that party, the other forty-four being strongly opposed to any organic change. The result was, that the governor and legislature were then soon in harmony; and that noble colony seemed to be more firmly than ever attached to the British monarchy.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1836, 314-316.

54. Violent proceedings of the Assembly in Lower Canada.

The course of events, however, was by no means equally satisfactory in the lower province, for there the great majority of the inhabitants were Roman Catholics, of French descent, and speaking the French language, and their separate nationalities and religious discord came to swell the tide of temporal discontent. In addition to an elective upper house, and entire control over the public accounts, whether voted by themselves in the shape of taxes, or derived from the hereditary revenue of the Crown, they now insisted that the whole waste-lands of the province belonged to themselves in fee-simple, and that a charter, granting a small part of them to a company for the sake of improvement, should be annulled. Government in vain endeavoured to get them to vote any sum for the civil service of the colony, or the payment of the judges and other public servants, now three years in arrear. They voted the payment of their own salaries, and that of Mr Roebuck, their agent in Parliament, but nothing more; and at length Lord Gosford, finding them utterly untractable, was under the necessity of proroguing the house early in March, before which they voted an address, complaining of their grievances, to the Colonial

CHAP. XXXVI. 1836.

Secretary in England. The Assembly met again in October, and insisted on their former demands, and were even proceeding to frame an act of their own authority, declaring the upper house elective, when their proceedings were stopped by a prorogation on 4th October. It had now become evident that the Canadian malcontents were acting under foreign sacerdotal direction; that their petitions were entirely framed to support O'Connell's demand for an elective House of Peers in Great Britain, and their agitation got up to aid that which he was conducting in Ireland.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1836, 317-321.

55. Public meetings on both sides. The banquets in London and Leeds.

The extremely small majority of Ministers in the House of Commons, and the large majority against them in the House of Lords, suggested to the leaders on both sides the expedience of endeavouring to strengthen their hands, during the recess of Parliament, by public meetings of their respective friends and partisans throughout the country. A great number of such assemblies accordingly took place, chiefly in the great towns. The leading topics on the Liberal side were the necessity of rallying round the Government in its distress, and protecting the country from the dreaded invasion of the Tories; on the Conservative, the necessity of adhering to the landmarks of the constitution, and preventing any farther invasion of it in Church or State. The most imposing meeting on the first side was held in Drury Lane Theatre, in honour of Mr Hume and Mr Byng, the members for Middlesex, which was attended by eleven hundred persons, and very Radical sentiments were expressed, particularly by Mr Grote. Inferior to this meeting in numbers, one much more remarkable for statesmanlike views and eloquence was given in Leeds to Lord Morpeth, the Irish Secretary. "I value," said he, "the constitution, and will do my utmost to maintain it, but under its broad and expansive shade I would remove every obstacle, and clear away every avenue of access, to every class, to every creed, to every race, that owns its sway and courts its shelter. I would

Oct. 20.

proceed in reducing and removing all the remainder of exclusive privileges and monopolies by which one class of our countrymen may be benefited to the detriment of the rest. I would give to religious as well as civil freedom the most unobstructed range; and at one act I would desire to banish from our temples and altars the clash of sordid disputes and civil bickerings. I would cling to no abuse because it is ancient; shrink from no improvement because it is change. The destiny of parties, as of nations, is beyond human ken; but I shall always, as a member of party, recollect with pride that in four short years we have reformed the representation of the people in Parliament—reformed and opened the municipal corporations of England and Scotland—swept from our blushing records the demon of slavery—opened wide the seas and shores of the globe to British trade and enterprise. And this, the legislation of four short years, has been—let the over-timid and the over-bold mark this—achieved without one form of the constitution being violated—without one breach of the law being countenanced—without one drop of human blood being spilled." [1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1836, 14, 15.

56. The Glasgow banquet to Sir R. Peel. Jan. 11.

If those eloquent words were a glowing, and in many respects just survey of the Whig legislation since the accession of that party to power, an occasion was ere long afforded to Sir R. Peel of declaring his political sentiments before a still greater and more influential assembly. On the 11th January, a vast meeting was held in Glasgow, to which persons flocked from all the west of Scotland, in honour of that statesman, who had just been elected Lord Rector of the University there, in opposition to Sir John Campbell, the Attorney-General. Covers were laid for 3432 persons, in a magnificent hall, erected for the occasion, in the centre of the city. By far the greater part of the wealth, intelligence, and worth of the west of Scotland was assembled on the occasion; and this embraced many who had been keen reformers five years before. Sir Robert addressed himself in an espe-

CHAP. XXXVI. 1837.

cial manner to them. "I want not," said he, "to taunt you with reaction or conversion; but I say, if you adhere to the sentiments which you professed in 1830, it is here you should come. You consented to a reform, to which you were invited in a speech by your sovereign, expressly on the condition that it should be according to the acknowledged principles of the constitution. I see the necessity of widening the foundations on which the defence of our constitution and our religious establishments must rest. But let us come to the main point, for I do not wish to conciliate your confidence by hoisting false colours. I mean to support the national establishments which connect Protestantism with the State in the three countries. (Loud cheers, the whole company rising.) I mean to support, in its full integrity, the House of Lords (loud cheers), as an essential and indispensable condition to the maintenance of the constitution under which we live. Do you also concur in that expression of opinion? (Loud acclamations.) And if you do, it is a timely declaration of it. The *hour has arrived*, when, if these are our feelings, we must be prepared to act upon them. The disturbing influence of foreign example has diminished, the dazzling illusion of the glorious days has passed away; the affections of the people are visibly gravitating again to their old centre,—full of a respect for property, a love of rational freedom, and an attachment to long-established institutions. From these walls, I trust, a spirit will go forth to animate the desponding, and to encourage the timid. I look abroad from the spot on which I stand, to the moral influence of that opinion which constitutes 'the cheap defence of nations'—I look to it for the maintenance of that system of government which protects the rich from spoliation, and the poor from oppression. I look to that spirit which will range itself under no tawdry banner of revolution, but unfurl and rally round the flag that has 'braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze.'[1] Yes! I feel not a shadow of

[1] Ann. Reg. 1837, 16, 17.

doubt that it will continue to float in triumph, and that the constitution, tried as it has been in the storms of adversity, will come forth purified and fortified in the rooted convictions, the feelings, the affections, of a religious, a moral, and a patriotic people."

57. Opening of Parliament. Jan. 31.

Parliament met on the 31st January, and so painfully evident had the weakness of Ministers become from the events of the two last sessions, that it was confidently expected by all parties that before the session closed a change of government would have taken place. This, however, was prevented by one of those events which betray the subjection of human affairs to a higher power, and the frequent disappointment of what appear at the time the most well-founded anticipations. The operation of the act permitting the establishment of joint-stock banks, and "the difficult but pressing question of establishing some legal provision for the poor in Ireland," were specially recommended to the attention of the legislature. Warm debates took place on the Address, but no division in either house. The chief point dwelt on by the Radicals was the want of earnest purpose and vigorous conduct in the Ministry, who were described by Mr Roebuck as "even worse than the Tories;" and their whole policy, both foreign and domestic, was made the subject of severe vituperation by the party which had so recently convulsed the nation with declamations in their favour as the authors of the Reform Bill.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1837, 25-28; Parl. Deb. xxxvi. 1-44.

58. Irish Corporations Bill.

The first party move made in this session was the reintroduction of the Irish Municipal Corporations Bill, which was again brought forward in the House of Commons by Lord John Russell. The only difference between this bill and the preceding one was in the nomination of sheriffs for the municipalities, in regard to which it was provided that a list of six names should be furnished by the town-council to the Lord-lieutenant, and if he rejected the whole, the nomination was to rest with him. The bill, after three nights' debate, passed the Commons by a

CHAP. XXXVI. 1837.

majority of 302 to 247, or 55.* When it went up to the House of Lords, symptoms of a compromise appeared. The Duke of Wellington, after observing that this was one of three bills recommended to their consideration in the Speech from the Throne, the other two relating to the Irish poor and the Irish tithes, moved that the consideration of the question should be *postponed* till the other measures came before them. This was carried by a majority of 77, the numbers being 192 to 115. So indignant were the Radicals at this renewed instance of independence on the part of the House of Lords, that Mr Hume said the same night, in a committee of supply in the House of Commons, that as the Lords were resolved to stop all reform, the Commons had better *put a bar to all supplies;* and he therefore moved that the chairman should leave the chair, and sit again on the 9th of June. This extreme proposal was received with loud cheers from his own side, and only withdrawn upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer assuring the House that the money was absolutely required to discharge the obligations of the State.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1837, 51, 55, 59.

The next subject introduced was that of the poor-laws in Ireland; and so urgent was the case, and so startling the facts which Mr Nicholl's valuable report

* Mr Sheil, in the course of this debate, gave vent to a striking burst of eloquence in reference to the epithet of "Aliens," which, during the debate on the same subject in the Upper House, had been applied to the Roman Catholics of Ireland by Lord Lyndhurst. "The Duke of Wellington," said he, "is not a man of sudden emotions; but he should not, when he heard that word used, have forgotten Vimeira, and Badajoz, and Salamanca, and Toulouse, and the last glorious conflict which crowned all his former victories. On that day, when the destinies of mankind were trembling in the balance, when the batteries spread slaughter over the field, and the legions of France rushed again and again to the onset, did the '*aliens*' then flinch? On that day the blood of the men of England, of Ireland, and of Scotland, was poured forth together: they fought on the same field; they died the same death; they were stretched in the same pit; their dust was commingled; the same dew of heaven fell on the grass that covered them; the same grass sprung from the soil in which they reposed together; and is it to be endured that we are to be called aliens and strangers to that empire for whose salvation our best blood has been shed?"—*Parl. Deb.* xxxvi. 936. In bursts of fervid eloquence of this description the Irish genius is often superior to either the English or Scotch.

59. Poor-law Bill, which passes without a division. Feb. 13.

brought out on the subject, that, strong as was the disposition on both sides to make Irish questions a party struggle, the bill brought in by Ministers received the concurrence of the House of Commons. Lord John Russell introduced the subject on the 13th February; and his proposal, as is generally the case when the dreaded topic of an assessment is broached in a popular assembly, fell very far short indeed of the real necessities of the case. He proposed to establish 100 workhouses, each to contain 800 inmates, which would provide for 80,000 persons, and as their cost was only estimated *at* 1*s.* 6*d. a-week each*, the entire expense would be only £312,000 a-year! Mr O'Connell, while he expressed, contrary to his former assertions, a qualified assent to the measure, justly exposed the utter fallacy of supposing that a measure which proposed only to afford the wretched pittance of 1s. 6d. a-week to 80,000 persons, could afford any real relief in a country where, according to Mr Nicholl's report, there were, for more than half of every year, 585,000 heads of families and 2,300,000 persons dependent on them, in a state of utter destitution. Inadequate as the measure was, however, it was a mighty step in advance in Ireland, because it laid the foundations, at least, of a more extended system, and established a set of functionaries throughout the country in connection with Government, to whom the wants of its inhabitants would become known, and their necessities communicated to the proper quarter. Great alarm was expressed at the proposed assessment of £312,000 a-year, which only showed the happy ignorance of Ireland of direct taxation at that period; for the rental on which it was to be levied was £13,000,000, so that the rate on an average was only 2½ per cent.[1] It was a striking proof how little the real state of Ireland was understood at this period, and how ignorant the statesmen of Great Britain were of the real extent of the social evils under which Ireland laboured,[2] that in the course of this debate Lord Howick stated it

[1] Ann. Reg. 1837, 69, 70; Parl. Deb. xxxvi. 454, 516.

[2] Parl. Deb. xxxvi. 496.

CHAP. XXXVI. 1837.

as an extraordinary and alarming circumstance, that in the last year the emigrants from Great Britain and Ireland of Irish birth were 39,000 ;—fifteen years afterwards they reached 368,000 in one year.

60. Statistics of Irish Destitution.

The immense importance of the introduction of a poor-law into Ireland, on however inadequate a scale at first, was soon apparent. Commissioners were appointed to work the act, and they made a report the following year. In a debate which took place in the next session of Parliament on an amended bill, introduced on the same subject, Mr O'Connell, appealing to the report of the Poor-Law Commissioners for the facts he stated, made the following striking observations: "There are in Ireland 585,000 heads of families in a state of actual destitution during the greater part of the year. This will imply between them and their families nearly 3,000,000 persons, for a large portion of whom relief must be provided ; and it cannot be estimated that less than £1,000,000 a-year will be required: It is a singular circumstance that in Ireland there are more agricultural labourers than in Great Britain, there being in the former country 1,131,715, and in the latter only 1,055,982. But in Great Britain there are 32,250,000 acres under cultivation—in Ireland only 14,600,000. In the former country the money value of the agricultural produce is £150,000,000 a-year—in the latter, raised by a greater number of labourers, only £36,000,000. Thus, though the quantity of cultivated land in Ireland is within a fraction equal to half that of Great Britain, *the value of its produce is less than a fourth.* The cause of this disparity is the want of capital ; and yet, in order to attract capital to the cultivation of land, it is proposed to put a heavy additional tax upon it.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1838, 109; Parl. Deb. xl. 572.

"Another test of the poverty of Ireland is to be found in the finance returns. From these state papers up to January 5, 1837, it appeared that the total gross revenue of Great Britain for the preceding year was £55,085,000,

while that of Ireland was only £4,807,000. So that Great Britain, with a population of 16,000,000, paid *eleven times* as much taxes as Ireland with a population of 8,000,000! Can anything so strongly demonstrate the inferiority of Ireland in point of property? and yet they were going to add another million to the amount of its taxation in the shape of a poor-law." There can be no doubt that the facts here referred to by Mr O'Connell were sufficiently remarkable; but it is extraordinary that so acute an observer did not see that they established another fact, utterly fatal to his constant complaint of the oppressive nature of the English government of Ireland. It followed from these figures that Great Britain, in proportion to its population, was 5½ *times as heavily taxed as Ireland;* and it is in vain to pretend that this was owing to the taxes on property of the latter country being so small, for the Irish rental at this period exceeded £13,000,000, while that of Scotland was under £5,000,000!![1] *

61. Great difference in the statistics of the two countries of Great Britain and Ireland.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1838, 109.

Mr O'Connell and his whole Catholic supporters did their utmost to defeat the measure; a striking proof of the foreign influence under which they were acting, for in the former year he had given a qualified adherence to the proposal, and the evidence in support of it had since been

62. Final establishment of poor-laws there.

* The Report of the Commissioners established several facts of the most important description, and speaking volumes as to the absolute necessity of a poor-law in Ireland. "The number of agricultural labourers in Ireland actually exceeded those of England by 75,000, while with a less fertile soil the amount of agricultural produce raised in England is four times greater. In England, the wages of agricultural labourers are from 8s. to 10s. a-week, in Ireland from 2s. to 2s. 6d. There are 585,000 heads of families, who for seven months in the year are without employment, and the persons dependent on them are 1,500,000 more. No less than 567,000 persons have no land, and live in summer by occasionally getting 6d. a-day wages, and in winter begging. The poverty endured by the destitute exceeds belief. Men are often found lying in bed because they have nothing to eat, and the pangs of hunger are less severe there than when up. They often become thieves in order to get the protection of a jail. They lie on rotten beds, in mud cabins, with scarce any covering, feeding on unripe potatoes and yellow weeds, feigning sickness in order to get into the cholera hospital, and when there often subject to vomitings, which were mistaken for the first symptoms of that disease, the effect of mere hunger."—*Ann. Reg.* 1837, 71-72.

CHAP. XXXVI. 1837.

greatly strengthened. It passed, however, by large majorities in both houses—that in the Commons being 120 to 68; and although temporarily interrupted in its progress through the Upper House by the demise of the Sovereign, to be immediately related, it finally became law in July 1838. In the March following, twenty-two unions had been declared, and in eighteen of these guardians had been appointed. In the course of 1840, no less than a hundred and twenty-seven unions were appointed, and fourteen large workhouses had been erected for the reception of paupers; and the Commissioners, with just pride, reported that the measure was in full operation, and would work well for the redemption of Ireland. There was no law of *parochial* settlement introduced, and everything depended on residence in the unions. It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of this great healing measure for Ireland; for dreadful as was the distress induced by the famine of 1846, it was not one half of what it would have been, had there been, when that calamity arrived, no public establishments for the relief of the destitute, and no assessment to provide for their support. Ministers deserve the greatest credit for having carried through this most important measure, which was the more meritorious on their part that it was entirely new in Ireland, and the reluctance is always so great to admit any change, however necessary, which involves any assessment on property. It must be added, to the honour of the reformed House of Commons, that a most creditable, patriotic, and disinterested zeal was evinced on all sides in the discussion of this measure, insomuch that, it was truly said by Mr O'Connell, it could not be discovered from the speeches to what side the members delivering them belonged. This was particularly honourable to the Protestant members of Ireland, as they represented nineteen-twentieths of the landed property of that country, upon whom the burden was to

be imposed. If an exception to this remark is to be made in the case of Mr O'Connell and most of the Irish Catholic members, who ultimately resisted the measure with all their strength after its necessity had been clearly demonstrated, and its beneficial effects had already begun to be experienced, it is not so much to be ascribed as a fault to them, as lamented as a result of that foreign sacerdotal influence under which they acted, and which has so often forced them into a course directly at variance with the best interests of their country.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1837, 76, 1839, 300; Parl. Deb. xliii. 715, xliv. 28; Hall's Ireland, i. 7, iii. 352.

63. Reflections on this subject.

The argument mainly relied on by the opponents of the measure, and especially insisted on by Mr O'Connell and his followers in their last opposition to it, was the well-known one so often urged by the political economists of the Malthus school, that every system of general relief to the poor, whether voluntary or compulsory, is calculated to produce more evil than it can possibly remove, because it gives an undue extension to the principle of population,—the main source, according to them, of the chief disorder and suffering of society. It never occurred to them that Ireland itself afforded a decisive proof of the erroneous nature of that opinion; for in that country, when the population was so redundant that wages were 2s. 6d. a-week, it was doubling in thirty years; while in England, where comfort was so general, and the demand for labour so considerable that wages were 10s. a-week, it did not double once in a century. Nor is it difficult to see wherein the error consisted. Population was excessive in Ireland from the excess of poverty; the principle of increase had become unlimited in its operation, from the absence of all the checks provided by nature to its action. These checks are mainly the prudential considerations which occasion an abstinence from marriage till there is some prospect of providing for a family. Nothing destroys the operation of this check so effectually as the constant sight of unrelieved distress, and the experienced

CHAP. XXXVI. 1837.

inability to better the condition. The typhus fever itself is not more contagious than habits of improvidence and excessive poverty, for they appeal to the strongest desire of uncivilised man, the sexual impulse and the love of ease. The poor-laws, which seized the worst cases of the *poverty patients*, and put them in public hospitals, did the same benefit to the habits of the remaining labouring classes which the abstraction of the typhus patients did to their health. It stopped the spread of the moral disorder, by secluding the worst of those afflicted with the highly contagious pestilence.

64. Ministerial plan for abolishing church-rates.

To conciliate the Dissenters in England, a bill was brought forward by Ministers to abolish church-rates in that country; and as the sum levied in this way was about £250,000 a-year, it was necessary to provide for it from some other source. With this view, it was proposed to take the whole property of bishops, deans, and chapters out of the hands of those functionaries, and to vest it in the hands of eleven commissioners, by whom the salaries of these functionaries were to be paid. By this means it was calculated a surplus revenue of £250,000 a-year might be realised, by depriving the Church of the profit at present derived from the renewal of leases, and this sum was to be applied to the repair of churches in lieu of church-rates. The obvious objection to this plan was, that it was based on the principle of *church spoliation*, because it proceeded on the idea that the property of the Church was to be exclusively burdened with the expense of upholding churches instead of the whole community, and that, to realise the requisite fund, the whole property of the higher dignitaries of the Church was to be taken out of their hands. It excited, accordingly, from the very first, a warm opposition: the bishops, headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, took the lead in resisting it; and so repugnant was it to the general feelings of the community, that the majority in the House

of Commons on the second reading was only *five*—the numbers being 287 to 282. This was the narrowest division which had taken place since Sir Robert Peel's dissolution, and it was fatal to the bill, which was no farther proceeded with, even in the Lower House, though it had been introduced as the leading measure of the session. Indeed, in former times, so small a majority would have at once led to the resignation of the ministry who brought it forward; but it was evident to all, that new maxims of state in this respect must follow the Reform Bill; for parties were now so equally divided that no government on either side could, on a leading party-question, expect a large majority; and therefore, to hold that such a majority was indispensable to ministerial existence, was equivalent to holding that there could never be a ministry at all.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxxviii. 1073, 1384; Ann. Reg. 1837, 84, 93, 103.

65. Lord Normanby's administration in Ireland.

The extremely small majority on this occasion deterred Ministers from again bringing forward the Irish Church Bill, involving the appropriation principle, this session; and the death of the King, which occurred in the middle of it, almost as a matter of necessity threw the question over to the next session. In the mean time, every exertion was made by the local government in Ireland to keep the Catholics in good-humour, and reconcile them to the postponement of their hopes of gratification from the expected humiliation of the Church. For this purpose, Lord Normanby, who was the Lord-lieutenant, resorted to several measures, some of a judicious, others of a very questionable tendency. Of the first kind was a remodelling of the police in 1836, which was put on a much more efficient footing. Great exertions were made to conciliate the Catholics, by placing at their disposal the greater part of the patronage of the kingdom; from the attorney-general's gown to the epaulet of the police, a favourable ear was lent to persons recommended by Romish influence. In a country abounding as Ireland

CHAP. XXXVI. 1837.

did in starving ambition, this was without doubt a very powerful engine of government. But in addition to that, he had recourse to much more questionable measures. Availing himself of the prerogative of mercy, which is the brightest jewel in the viceroy's as the royal crown, he rendered it so common, and prostituted it to such interests, as rendered it a curse rather than a blessing to the country. Setting out from the Castle of Dublin, he proceeded on a regular progress through the provinces, liberating such prisoners as had had their cases favourably represented to him by the local authorities. It appeared, from his own statement in the House of Peers on 21st March 1839, when this matter was brought under discussion, that between November 1837 and January 31, 1839, he had 1631 memorials presented to him, praying for the liberation of prisoners, of whom he had liberated 822.* It must be added, that the prerogative of mercy had been as largely exercised by previous lord-lieutenants, particularly by Lord Wellesley in 1834, and that during Lord Normanby's administration there had been a sensible diminution in committals, and increase of convictions; the latter having become 71 per cent of the former. But all such wholesale use of the prerogative of mercy is dangerous, and of bad example, especially in a country such as Ireland, where party spirit ran so high, and every measure of Government, even the most humane and generous, is invariably set down by the Opposition to the undue influence of their political opponents. When the matter, accordingly, was brought before the two Houses of Parliament, Ministers had only a majority of 26 in

* Viz.—Memorials, ... 1631

Refused without advice,	371
Refused with advice,	431
Liberated without advice,	388
Liberated with advice,	634
Undisposed of,	145

—*Parl. Deb.*, xlix. 138.

the Commons; while in the Lords, resolutions, condemnatory of Lord Normanby's policy, especially in the administration of justice and the distribution of mercy, brought forward by Lord Brougham, were carried, on August 1839, by a majority of 34 in a house of 138.* The result was, that Lord Normanby retired from the viceroyalty, and was succeeded by Lord Ebrington.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xlvii. 4-7, xlix. 1381; Ann. Reg. 1839, 55, 60.

66. Compromise between the two houses on the appropriation clause and Municipal Bill.

The compromise between the two houses, evidently pointed at in the postponement of the municipal bill by the House of Lords in 1837, was prevented from being carried into effect at the time in consequence of the King's death, and dissolution consequent upon it, in the summer of that year. As the new elections, however, left the comparative strength of parties very much the same as before, the leaders on both sides saw the necessity of coming to a compromise. On the one hand, Lord Melbourne, whose easy temper and *insouciant* disposition was always inclined to avoid a difficulty rather than face it, had long been anxious to have the matter adjusted, which could only be done by mutual concessions, and he had only been restrained by the ardent feelings of his followers from going into an arrangement long before. He had now, however, become so strongly impressed with the imprudence, to give it no harsher name, of annually carrying a measure by considerable majorities in the Lower House, which was as regularly thrown out by still larger majorities in the Upper, that at length he made a compromise of the difficulty a Cabinet question. On the other hand, the Duke of Wellington and Sir R. Peel were no less impressed with the stoppage to useful legislation which resulted from this state of antagonism of the two houses, and the danger that, if it continued much longer, the nation might become convulsed on the subject, and the cry for peerage reform

* "The majority, when the case was first brought forward, was 5—63 to 58."—*Ann. Reg.*, 1839, p. 60.

CHAP. XXXVI. 1838.

be as formidable as ever that for parliamentary had been. Impressed with these ideas, an approximation took place between the leaders on both sides, and the conditions of it were, that the appropriation clause was to be abandoned in the Irish Church Bill, on the one hand, and the Peers were to give way in their resistance to corporate reform in that country, on the other.

67. Which is carried into effect.

It was easier, however, for the leaders, who felt the responsibility of command on both sides, to come to an understanding, than to persuade their followers on either, who were animated only with the eagerness of conflict, to go into it. At length, however, though not without great difficulty, and no small ebullition of spleen on both sides, the desired adjustment was effected, though more than a year elapsed before it was fully carried into effect. On 27th March 1838, Sir R. Peel inquired of Lord John Russell what course he intended to pursue in regard to the Irish Tithe Bill, and whether he meant to introduce it with the appropriation clause in terms of the resolutions of 1835? Lord John, in reply, stated that the Ministers intended to place "the tithe question on a footing altogether new," as it appeared useless and irritating to prolong, after a conflict of four years, an argument which produced nothing. It was generally felt at the time, what was the truth, that this was an announcement of the abandonment of the appropriation clause. But in order to bring the matter to a test, Sir T. Acland,

May 14.

on 14th May, brought forward a distinct motion for the rescinding of the resolutions of the house, in April 1835, in favour of it. Sir R. Peel on this occasion gave vent to natural and excusable feelings of pride at seeing the Tithe Bill now reduced to the form which he had announced for it, when in power in March 1835, and the appropriation clause, which his opponents had declared to be essential to the measure, withdrawn by their own hands. The motion was lost by a majority of 19;

and it was no wonder it was so, for the house could hardly be expected to confess defeat by rescinding their own resolutions. The bill was now brought forward, on July 2, *without* the appropriation clause, and a motion made by Mr Ward for the restoration of that clause lost by a majority of 270 to 46, the Ministers themselves voting against it. The bill as it now stood passed the House of Lords without a division, and was a very great improvement, for it provided the means of a general commutation of tithes in Ireland, under a deduction of 25 per cent only, which in the circumstances was not unreasonable. There can be no doubt that Lord Melbourne acted the part of a true patriot on this occasion, for he gave up a mere party question to insure the passing of a great social improvement. That, however, was not the view taken of it by party men on either side; and Lord Brougham gave expression to the general feeling in Parliament on the subject, when he said: "I never looked to see the day when appropriation should be given to the winds, as if the thing had never been—as if it had not been the means of unseating one Ministry and seating another. So much for appropriation!—the chapter of appropriation, its origin, history, flourishing, decline, and fall; how in the fulness of *time*, having answered every good purpose, it has been gently laid aside and put to rest without a single requiem being sung over its grave."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xlii. 1203, 1325, 1345, 1353; Ann. Reg. 1838, 144.

68. Settlement of the Irish Municipal Bill.

The settlement of the Municipal Corporation Bill in Ireland did not take place quite so soon; but the compromise in regard to it, too, was in the end carried into effect. Lord John Russell, on 7th February 1837, moved for leave to bring in the Irish Municipal Bill, which was carried by a majority of 55—the numbers being 302 to 247; and, as already mentioned, the consideration of the bill was adjourned in the House of Peers till it was seen what course Ministers were to adopt in regard to the Irish Tithe Bill. Early in 1838 the bill was again intro-

CHAP. XXXVI. 1838.

duced by Lord John Russell in the House of Commons, and in pursuance of the agreement, Sir R. Peel did not object to the second reading, and admitted the principle of popular election, but moved in committee that £10 rating should be the qualification, which was rejected by a majority of only 20; the numbers being 286 to 266. When the bill came into the House of Lords, Lord Lyndhurst moved as an amendment that the qualification be fixed at £10, which was carried by 96 to 36. Several other minor amendments were also carried in the Peers, which were so distasteful to the Commons that Lord John Russell threw up the bill altogether for that session.[1]

[1] 1 Ann. Reg. 1838, 125-131; Parl. Deb. xliv. 871, 975.

69. Fate of the bill in 1839 and 1840.

Matters looked very unpromising, in this stage, for the success of the compromise; and they were not materially improved in the next session of Parliament. Lord John Russell again brought forward the bill as it stood, and the second reading was carried by a majority of 26, Sir R. Peel and Lord Stanley voting with the majority. Sir R. Peel proposed, however, in committee, that the rating should be raised to £10 to confer a vote, which was carried against him in the Commons by a majority of 21, and in his favour in the Lords by a majority of 43; and upon this amendment being brought under the consideration of the Commons, Lord John Russell abandoned the bill a second time. Matters thus seemed to be inextricable, and the compromise as far as ever from being carried into effect; but in the following year it met with more success. The bill was then introduced by Lord Morpeth, on 14th February, with the rating fixed at £8, and on this occasion Sir R. Peel and his whole personal followers voted for the bill, on the ground that a settlement of the question had become indispensable, and that the bill, as now amended, was the best which in the circumstances could be got.[2] It passed the Commons, accordingly, by a majority of 148; in the Lords, the qualification was again raised to £10, being that in the Scotch Municipal

Aug. 12, 1839.

Feb. 14, 1840.

[2] 2 Ann. Reg. 1840, 112-117; Parl. Deb. xliv. 1165-1172.

Bill; and the bill, as thus amended, having been acceded to by the Commons, it passed the Lower House, and on 18th August received the royal assent.

70. Affair of the Vixen. Its origin.

An event occurred in 1837, which evinced, in striking colours, at once the ambitious designs of Russia in the East, and the weakness of Great Britain at that period to restrain her advances. Ever since the treaty of Adrianople in 1829, the cabinet of St Petersburg had been, without intermission, pursuing that system of encroachment and aggrandisement which they had so long adopted to undermine the influence of all other powers in the Euxine. Among other designs to weaken the power of Turkey, and establish the Muscovite influence in Central Asia, they had for long waged a bloody war with the Circassian tribes inhabiting the great range of the Caucasus, which runs from the Euxine to the Caspian Sea. This war had been waged with various success; but after a quarter of a century of almost uninterrupted hostilities the mountaineers were still unsubdued. But the Russians, according to their usual system of advancing pretensions beyond the march of their standards, took upon themselves to declare the whole coast of Circassia next the Euxine in a state of blockade.[1]

1 Doubleday's Life of Peel, ii. 243, 244; Ann. Reg. 1837, 207.

71. Capture of the vessel by the Russians. Nov. 29, 1836.

William IV., to whom the honour of Great Britain, and especially of the royal navy, was especially dear, had long viewed with undisguised jealousy these strides on the part of Russia; and in order to bring them to a test, he secretly encouraged Mr Bell, a merchant in London, to send a cargo of salt to the Circassian coast, never doubting that the Russians would not venture to violate the British flag. Before doing so, however, Mr Bell wrote to the Foreign Office, inquiring whether "the Russian blockade on the Black Sea, to the south of the river Kouban, was recognised by the British Government." To this he received an answer cautiously worded, "referring the parties to the Gazette, in which they would find all such notifications as those alluded to for the informa-

CHAP. XXXVI. 1837.

tion of all concerned." Upon looking into the Gazette, no notification of the blockade in question was to be found; and therefore Mr Bell, conceiving himself to be perfectly safe, despatched the Vixen with her cargo from the port of London. Mr James Bell, the supercargo, brother of the freighter, took out despatches from the Foreign Office to Lord Ponsonby, the British minister at Constantinople. To render assurance doubly sure, Mr James Bell, on reaching that city, waited on Mr Urquhart, the secretary to the embassy, and was by him referred to the ambassador. Lord Ponsonby informed him that the Russian government had sent him an intimation of restrictions of a conditional nature on this trade, but that Russia had no right to impose any restrictions whatever, and encouraged him to persevere in his voyage, assuring him, as far as his opinion went, of the support of his own Government in case of any interference on the part of the Russian officials.* In this expectation, however, the event proved he was mistaken, for the Vixen, having pursued her course towards the Circassian coast, was captured off Soudjouk-Kale, close under the shore, by a Russian cruiser, on account "of a breach of blockade."[1] The crew escaped on shore, where they were kindly treated by the Circassians; but the vessel and her

[1] Ann. Reg. 1837, 207; Doubleday, ii. 248.

* "I informed Lord Ponsonby that it was my intention to proceed in a vessel, which I expected daily, to a certain point on the coast of Circassia, which I had fixed upon as most eligible for the trade I had in view; and that as I had ascertained before leaving London that Government did not then acknowledge any right on the part of Russia to impede trade with the country in question, and as nothing had since occurred which seemed to have changed the state of affairs, I should endeavour to attain the object I had in view, and should not be diverted from it, unless force were used on the part of the Russian government, [illegible] hoped to obtain his lordship's aid in so doing.

"In reply his l[illegible]ip stated, that he perfectly coincided in the propriety of the plan I had ad[illegible]ed, to which he had no objections whatever to offer, as he considered it an indisputable fact that Russia had no right to interfere with or prescribe rules for British trade to Circassia; and that if I adhered to the straightforward course I had detailed to him, he had no doubt of my being enabled to establish a claim for support from the British Government, in which he should be glad to render me all the assistance in his power; requesting me at the same time to transmit him information as to what success attended my enterprise."—JAMES S. BELL; URQUHART'S *Progress of Russia*, 325; and DOUBLEDAY, vi. 246.

cargo were confiscated and declared good prize by the Russian authorities.

1837.

This daring outrage does not appear to have called forth any vigorous remonstrance on the part of the British Government; but it was on two different occasions made the subject of debate in the House of Commons—first on 17th March, on the motion of Mr Roebuck; and again on 8th December, after the death of King William, on the motion of Mr Attwood. On both occasions the answer of Lord Palmerston was the same. He did not assert that Circassia was either virtually at war with Russia, or part of the dominions of that power: he did not assert that Soudjouk-Kale was a Russian possession: he avoided saying whether the condemnation was justifiable on the ground of breach of blockade, or municipal law, or quarantine. He simply refused to grant the papers demanded, and said that, in the whole circumstances of the case, Government saw no ground for making any further demand upon the Russian government. The case had been submitted to the consideration of the law-officers of the Crown, but he declined to produce their opinion, from which it was justly inferred that it was unfavourable to Ministers. To the surprise of all, Sir R. Peel took no part in either debate; and thus the matter, after exciting a great ferment in the country, was allowed to drop. Many sturdy patriots, who recollected the days of Pitt and Nelson, asked where was the thunder of the British navy when such an insult was offered to its flag, and deeply lamented the sudden degradation to which the empire, without any visible external disaster, had been brought. But more calm observers, who looked beyond the surface of things, observed that the change, striking as it was, was to be ascribed to causes more remote than any timidity or weakness in the men now at the head of affairs.[1] Government was obviously intent upon upholding the Russian alliance in order to check the designs of France in the Levant; and Sir R. Peel felt too deeply the monetary difficulties which his

72. Proceedings in Parliament on the subject, which is dropped by Government. March 17, and Dec. 8.

[1] Parl. Deb. March 17 and Dec. 8, 1837; Ann. Reg. 1837, 207, 208; Doubleday, ii. 247-251; Urquhart's Progress of Russia, 320, 325, 329.

CHAP. XXXVI. 1837.

own policy had brought upon the country, to venture upon a course which would at once have exposed its weakness, and entailed upon all classes unbounded disasters.

73. Death of the King. June 20, 1837.

The monarch upon whom the measures had been forced, which necessarily led to this protracted contest between the two Houses of Parliament, did not survive to witness its termination. His health, which had been in general good since his accession to the throne, showed symptoms of decline in the spring of 1837, and increased so rapidly, that in the beginning of June it had become the cause of serious alarm to his family, whose attention to him was assiduous and tender. All the skill of his medical attendants proved insufficient to arrest the decay of nature, and he expired at Windsor at two o'clock on the morning of the 20th June. On the arrival of the news in London, orders were immediately issued for summoning a Privy Council at Kensington Palace, to take the oath of allegiance to the youthful Sovereign, QUEEN VICTORIA, daughter of the Duke of Kent, and the next in lineal descent to the throne. Her Majesty was only in her nineteenth year, having been born at Kensington Palace on 24th May 1819.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1837, 227, 237.

74. Accession of Queen Victoria. June 20.

She was suddenly called on to assume the sceptre of the greatest empire in the world, at an age when most of her sex, even the most gifted, have just begun to mingle with general society, and introduced into an assembly of the first and noblest of the land—grey-haired statesmen, and warriors who had filled the world with their renown —to receive their willing homage. Nevertheless, the mingled majesty and grace which the youthful Sovereign exhibited on the occasion were such as to excite universal admiration, and drew tears from many eyes in the august circle which had not been wet for half a lifetime. Warriors trembled with emotion who had never felt fear in presence of their enemies. Statesmen felt abashed, albeit long inured to the storms of the forum. The scene has been described with the truth of history, through the

colours of romance, by the hand of a master. "In a sweet and thrilling voice, and with a composed mien, which indicated rather the absorbing sense of august duty than an absence of emotion, the Queen announced her accession to the throne of her ancestors, and her humble hope that Divine Providence would guard over the fulfilment of her lofty trust. The prelates and chief men of her realm then advanced to the throne, and, kneeling before her, pledged their troth, and took the sacred oath of allegiance and supremacy—allegiance to one who rules over the land that the great Macedonian could not conquer; and over a continent of which even Columbus never dreamed; to the Queen of every sea, and of nations of every zone. Fair and serene, she has the blood and beauty of the Saxon. Will it be her proud destiny at length to bear relief to suffering millions, and with that soft hand, which might inspire troubadour and guerdon knights, break the last link in the chain of Saxon thraldom?"[1]

[1] Disraeli's Sybil, i. 92, 93; Ann. Reg. 1837, 238.

75. Her Majesty's Speech to the Privy Council.

When the ceremony of taking the oath of allegiance, which was first taken by "Ernest, King of Hanover," had been gone through, her Majesty, with a steady voice and perfect self-possession, thus addressed her assembled councillors: "The severe and afflicting loss which the nation has sustained by the death of his Majesty, my beloved uncle, has devolved upon me the duty of administering the government of this empire. This awful responsibility is imposed upon me so suddenly, and at so early a period of my life, that I should feel myself utterly oppressed by the burden, were I not sustained by the hope that Divine Providence, which has called me to this work, will give me strength for the performance of it; and that I shall find in the purity of my intentions, and in my zeal for the public welfare, that support and those resources which usually belong to a more mature age and to long experience. I place my firm reliance upon the wisdom of Parliament, and upon the loyalty and affection

CHAP. XXXVI. 1837.

of my people. I esteem it also a peculiar advantage that I succeed to a sovereign whose constant regard for the rights and liberties of his subjects, and whose desire to promote the amelioration of the laws and institutions of this country, have rendered his name the object of general attachment and veneration. Educated in England under the tender and enlightened care of a most affectionate mother, I have learned from my infancy to respect and love the constitution of my native country. It will be my unceasing study to maintain the reformed religion, as by law established, securing at the same time to all the full enjoyment of religious liberty. And I shall steadily protect the rights, and promote to the utmost of my power the happiness and welfare of all classes of my subjects."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1837, 237, 238.

76. Separation of Hanover and Great Britain, which goes to the Duke of Cumberland.

By the accession of Queen Victoria the crown of Hanover, which was destined to heirs-male, became separated from that of Great Britain, with which that state had been united under one head since the accession of George I., then Elector of Hanover, to the throne of these realms in 1714. It descended to the Duke of Cumberland, the next surviving male heir of George III. This severance of the two crowns, which had so long been united, however, excited very little attention, and was in no respect the subject of regret; so strong was the impression in the nation, that Great Britain was essentially a maritime power, and that the connection with a comparatively small German state was a source rather of weakness than strength, by involving us in Continental politics, and often compelling the nation to give protection, when no return on a corresponding scale could be afforded. The two states have since remained on terms of confidential amity, though the policy of their respective governments has often been materially different, and the position of Hanover, as one of the great German Confederacy, naturally led to a different dependence and separate interests.

CHAP. XXXVI.

1838.

77. Death of Mrs Fitzherbert. March 27.

Shortly before the youthful heiress of England ascended the throne of her fathers, another lady, in the fulness of years, descended to the tomb, who, under a different state of English law, might have sat on it. On the 27th March, Mrs FITZHERBERT expired at her house at Brighton, at the advanced age of eighty years. Her history had been very remarkable, and savoured rather of the changes of romance than the events of real life. Born on 26th July 1756, the youngest daughter of Walter Smythe, Esq. of Bambridge, in Hampshire, she was married in 1775 to Edward Weld, Esq. of Lulworth Castle, in the county of Dorset; and next to Thomas Fitzherbert, Esq. of Norbury in Surrey, who also died, without issue, in May 1781. When a widow for the second time, in 1785, in the enjoyment of an ample jointure, she met the Prince of Wales, with whom she immediately became the object of the most violent passion. Little accustomed to experience any resistance to his desires, he soon found that her virtue was proof against any but honourable intentions, while her beauty and fascination not only captivated his senses, but enthralled his imagination. The Marriage Act, however, opposed an invincible bar to a legal union with the fair enchantress; and Mr Fox, his intimate friend, in a long and eloquent letter, distinctly pointed out to him the extreme hazard with which any attempt to violate its provisions would be attended, both to the lady in question and himself. Such was the violence, however, of the Prince's passion, that he resolved at all hazards to persevere, and he at length obtained her consent to a private union, by the exhibition to her of a real or pretended attempt, in despair at her refusal, to commit suicide. The marriage ceremony was performed in private, and by a Protestant clergyman, though she was a Roman Catholic, but with perfect regularity, and in presence of witnesses; and the marriage certificate is in existence, in the hands of Messrs Coutts, the great bankers, at this moment. Mr Fox afterwards, as he said, "by

CHAP. XXXVI. 1838.

authority," denied in Parliament that any such marriage had taken place—a falsehood on the part of some one, which she never forgave. "The union proved unfortunate, as that able man had predicted. After living together for eight years, "the happiest," as the Prince himself said, "of his whole life," he was separated from her shortly before his marriage in 1797 with the Princess Caroline of Brunswick; and though she, after his severance from that Princess, again reverted, by advice of the Pope, to her conjugal connection with the Prince, yet the vexations arising from her ambiguous situation—a wife, and not a wife—were such, that they were finally separated before he ascended the throne. Fortunately there was no issue of the marriage. Mrs Fitzherbert possessed uncommon talents for conversation, her manner was fascinating in a remarkable degree, and her disposition kindly and affectionate. She was always treated with the highest respect by all the members of the royal family, and with their consent her servants wore the royal livery; and when George IV. descended to the tomb in 1830, he was interred, at his own request, with a miniature round his neck, which is supposed to have been that of the only person through life who had commanded his entire affections.[1]

[1] Mrs Fitzherbert's Memoirs, 5, 75, 86; Ann. Reg. 1837, 184, App. to Chron.

78. William IV.: his character.

Like all other sovereigns whose reign has been marked by important changes in the balance of parties or the structure of government, the character of William IV. has been very differently drawn by opposite parties, and even by the same party at different periods of his reign. At one time he was the idol of the populace, and the "most popular king since the days of Alfred," as long as it was supposed he headed the popular movement, and the well-devised fable of the hackney-coach had not lost its influence on the public mind. These sentiments gave way to others of the opposite description when it was discovered he hesitated in following the movement party in their last measures; that he had refused to create peers

to coerce the House of Lords; and sent for the Duke of Wellington to extricate him from the thraldom to which he was subjected. In truth, both opinions were exaggerated, and consequently erroneous. The sailor-king was neither the hero which he was called in April 1831, nor the demon which he was styled in November 1834. He was an open-minded, kind-hearted man, with good intentions, but no great range of intellect, and few of the qualities requisite for government in the extremely difficult circumstances in which he was called to the throne. Personally brave, and with the hereditary firmness of his race, he had also a secret vein of vanity in his character, which made him sometimes court the populace when they required no courting, and led him to overlook in present applause the effect of measures which, when they appeared, he was the first to regret. In perfect ignorance of its results, he gave a willing consent to the £10 clause in the Reform Bill; and the last years of his life were spent in vain endeavours to elude the effects, and bitter regrets for having consented to the introduction, of that great and decisive innovation.

77. Ill-founded complaints against him by the Conservatives.

More serious charges were brought against him at the time by the Conservatives, of having first precipitated the march of revolution by his dissolution of the House of Commons in April 1831, and then been premature in his attempt to stop it by his change of Ministry in November 1834. Neither charge appears to be well founded. Without disputing the decisive effect of the dissolution in 1831, which, beyond all doubt, was the turning-point in the contest, it is now evident, from subsequent events and revelations, that matters had then gone so far that they could not be arrested; and that, in truth, the Sovereign was then under such an amount of moral coercion that he was not a free agent. Possibly the revolution might have been arrested at an earlier period, but then it was impossible to do so. To have attempted it would certainly have led to a civil war, headed by a portion at

CHAP. XXXVI. 1838.

least of the Liberal chiefs, in the course of which, whatever party ultimately prevailed, the constitution and liberties of the country would as certainly have perished as those of Rome did in the democratic convulsion headed by Cæsar.

80. Beneficial effect of the change of Ministry and dissolution.

It is equally clear that the change of Ministry, and dissolution consequent on it, in the end of 1834, though not attended with the effect expected from it at the time, either by the Sovereign or the Conservatives, was a most important step, attended with highly beneficial consequences in the future progress of the convulsion. It gained for the friends of the constitution what is of inestimable importance in arresting the march of revolution—time. The dissolution having reduced the former Liberal majority of 300 to 10, the House of Peers was emboldened to step forward and resume its functions as an independent branch of the legislature. The attempt to coerce them by a creation of peers could not be renewed when the Sovereign was known to be hostile to such a measure, and experience had proved that another dissolution on such a question would probably lead only to the Conservatives obtaining a majority in the House of Commons. The Ministers, however little in reality inclined to it themselves, were forced to go on with revolutionary measures by their democratic allies; and as the Irish Catholic members constituted their entire majority, those measures were necessarily directed against the property of the Established Church. This is generally the second step in revolution: the first is to get the command of the legislature, the next to realise the fruits of victory by confiscating the property of the church. So it was in France—so it was in Spain and Portugal. But the vast majority of Liberals in the first reformed Parliament having been almost extinguished in the second, this course of measures, though attempted in this country, could not be carried through—*the progress of organic change was stopped.* The Radicals and Irish Catholics raised a pro-

digious outcry at this unexpected impediment to their designs; but the country did not respond to it, and no important organic change has been effected, or even seriously attempted, since the Reform Bill. The Municipal Bill was a social, not a political change. CHAP. XXXVI. 1838.

81. Cause of this.

The reason is, that the Anglo-Saxon character, however liable to sudden fits of violence, bordering for the time on national insanity, is in general, and when it gets time to cool, essentially of a practical character. The fervid temperament of the Scotch and Irish is different: like the French, it is frequently disposed to run all the hazards of speculation and fundamental change. But the natural disposition of the majority of the English, and of nearly the whole rural population, is abhorrence of theoretical innovation, but passion for practical improvement. The reform fervour in England now took this direction: the national mind, having cooled down, flowed back into its old and time-worn channel. Thence an entire change in the measures forced upon the parliamentary leaders; and this is what Sir Robert Peel, with his wonted sagacity as to present objects, distinctly perceived, and which affords the key to his whole subsequent conduct. The majority of the nation supported him during the long duel between the two houses, the prize at issue in which was further organic change; but they did so only because they were averse to such changes, and longed for the real fruits of that already made. They saw that he was the real man for these practical reforms, and not the elegant inexperienced nobleman who had headed them during the reform struggle. The great political victory which changed the Government in 1841, and the free-trade measures which immediately followed it, were both the natural consequence of the change in the national mind which was now going forward.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

ENGLAND FROM THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA IN JUNE 1837, TO THE RESIGNATION OF LORD MELBOURNE IN MAY 1839.

CHAP. XXXVII.

1837.

1. Vast extent and seeming prosperity of the British empire.

RESPLENDENT with glory, teeming with inhabitants, overflowing with riches, boundless in extent, the British empire, at the accession of QUEEN VICTORIA, seemed the fairest and most powerful dominion upon earth. It had come victorious through the most terrible strife which ever divided mankind, and more than once, in the course of it, singly confronted Europe in arms. It had struck down the greatest conqueror of modern times. It still retained the largest part of the continent of North America, and a new continent in Australia had been recently added, without opposition, to its mighty domains. All the navies of the world had sought in vain to wrest from the hands of its sovereign the sceptre of the ocean; all the industry of man, to rival in competition the produce of its manufactures or the wealth of its merchants. In science and literature it still kept the lead of all the nations of the earth. It had given birth to steam navigation, which had bridged the Atlantic, and railways, which had more than halved distance; it had revealed the electric telegraph, destined ere long to render instantaneous the transmission of thought. It had subdued realms which the Macedonian phalanx could not reach, and attained a dominion beyond what the Roman legions

had conquered. An hundred and twenty millions of men, at the period of its highest prosperity, obeyed the sceptre of Alexander; as many in after-times were blessed by the rule of the Antonines; but an hundred and fifty millions peopled the realms of Queen Victoria; and the sun never set on her dominions, for before "his declining rays had ceased to illuminate the ramparts of Quebec, his ascending beams flamed on the minarets of Calcutta."

2. Its many sources of weakness.

Veiled under so splendid an exterior, this vast empire contained many principles of weakness, and already exhibited the symptoms of mortality. Its extent had become too great, not for its real strength, but for that portion of its strength, unhappily extremely small, which the public temper would permit to be directed to the public service. It was brought in contact with the greatest empires upon earth, and was involved in questions likely to lead to differences with them; for in the East, both in the Euxine and Central Asia, it almost adjoined the territories which acknowledged the influence of Russia; in Europe it was frequently on the verge of war with France; while in the West it was perpetually exposed to danger from the encroaching spirit of America. Yet with all these dangers, and this vast and widely scattered dominion, the naval and military forces which its popular representatives would permit to be kept on foot were wretchedly small, and totally disproportioned either to the strength of the empire, the security of its distant possessions, or even the maintenance of its own independence. The Anglo-Saxon disposition, strangely compounded of pacific and warlike qualities, the love of gain and the thirst for glory, satiated with the latter from the splendid successes of the war, had turned, with unexampled and alarming avidity, into the former, which had now come wholly to absorb the national mind. The idea was general, almost universal, in the commercial towns, that the era of wars had passed, that mercantile interests would henceforth rule the world,

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

and that it was worse than useless to be at any expense at keeping up naval or military armaments which never could again be required. A thirst for gain had seized all classes; each was at once ambitious and discontented; and in their passion for advancement they had come to inflict serious wounds on each other.

3. Continued.

Realised wealth had established a system of currency which, for its own advantage, landed the nation every four or five years in a long course of suffering, as necessarily as night succeeds day; and suffering poverty sought protection from its consequences as regard its only property—labour—in strikes, which diffused universal suffering, and permanently alienated the different classes of society from each other. Great prosperity had recently been enjoyed, but it had passed away; the tide had turned, and suffering, general and long continued, was in prospect, likely only the more severely to be felt from the contrast it would exhibit to the prosperity which had preceded it. A sore feeling had come to pervade all ranks of society: the labouring, at least in towns, regarded their employers as their natural enemies, who were unjustly enriched with the fruits of their toil; the more wealthy looked on the working classes as spoliators ready to seize upon their property, on the first opportunity, either by open violence or legislative enactment. A great political revolution, happily without bloodshed, had recently taken place, but it had effected no practical alterations in society, or amelioration in the condition of the people, except substituting the monied aristocracy in towns for the landed aristocracy in the country as the rulers of the State. The democratic leaders had taken advantage of the general disappointment, which the blasting of the hopes excited by this change had occasioned, to excite the feelings of the working classes in the manufacturing districts against the whole institutions of the country: Chartism was rife in Great Britain; organised agitation perpetu-

ated misery in Ireland; Canada was on the verge of open insurrection; and the recent emancipation of the slaves in the West Indies, without materially benefiting them, had implanted the seeds of ruin in the planters. So many causes of danger could not fail ere long to produce a convulsion in some part of the empire, but, strange to say, it was first induced by external, not internal, influences. It arose from democratic ambition in the United States of America, and the severity of nature in the British Islands.

4. America: what was its great want?

Possessed of a territory ten times the area of France, and capable of maintaining in ease and comfort three hundred and fifty millions of inhabitants, with a soil generally rich and fertile, and intersected by a network of innumerable rivers, the natural canals of the country, the United States wanted only two things to become ere long the richest and most populous empire upon earth. These two things were *men and money;* but they were indispensable to the development of their resources. The forests with which the country was covered had overspread the earth with a rich soil, and mingled vegetable and animal remains of several feet in thickness, which promised a long course of fine harvests from its virgin riches; but it was still overshadowed by their massy boughs, and the axe of the backwoodsman was required for a course of years to cut down its primeval stems, and tear out its gigantic roots. Emigrants were coming in considerable numbers from Europe—those from the British Islands had already reached 60,000 annually; but they were lost in this immensity of space, and presented only a thin line of labourers, the pioneers of civilisation, along a frontier 1700 miles long where it was working into the forest. Capital was required for every new undertaking, but great as was the energy, unbounded the activity of the inhabitants of the United States, it could not be found in suf-

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

ficient quantities from their unaided resources; and the wages of labour, from the scarcity of hands, were so high that capital had little inducement to migrate from England to settle in a country where, although rent was nothing, the cost of production was double its own. The produce of the mines of gold and silver over the globe had been so fearfully diminished by the disastrous wars consequent on the South American revolution, that the annual supply for the use of the whole world had fallen below £9,000,000—not half its former amount—and this was nearly all absorbed by the necessities of Europe. Thus America, albeit splendidly furnished by all the blessings of nature, might have been chained to a slow progress, and at length slumbered on with a population doubling, like Europe, in five hundred years, were it not for one discovery which supplied all deficiencies, and kept it abreast of its destiny. This discovery was a PAPER CURRENCY.

5. Vast advantages of a paper currency in America.

This powerful agent for good or for evil was never more required, and has nowhere produced more important effects, than in the United States of America. It is historically known that the establishment of their independence, like the successful issue of the war of Rome with Carthage, and Great Britain with Napoleon, was mainly owing to the paper bearing a forced circulation, which was so plentifully issued by the insurgent States during the course of the contest. During the war with England in 1814, cash payments were universally and unavoidably suspended, and an immense amount of confusion and mercantile distress ensued in consequence in all the States of the Union. Banks had been established to the number of 246, which issued their own notes without limitation, which circulated through all the States of the Union, some at par, others at various degrees of discount, sometimes as much as a half, according to the reputed solvency of the establishment from which they issued; and the mass of notes in circulation was as great

as it afterwards became in 1834, with a population nearly double, and transactions three times as extensive. It was impossible that such a state of things could be allowed to continue, and to get out of it, Government, in 1816, established, by an act of the Congress, the famous Bank of the United States, with a capital of 35,000,000 dollars, and a charter for twenty years. Such was the combined energy and prudence of this great establishment, that, soon after its opening, cash payments were resumed in all the banks of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston, and soon after in all the banks of the Union. This important transition, however, was not made without great difficulty and an immense amount of embarrassment and insolvency. Between 1811 and 1820 no less than 165 banks, in different parts of the Union, either became bankrupt or withdrew from business. During this period of return to cash payments, industry was essentially blighted, suffering was universal, and the people, glad as usual to fix the responsibility of misfortune on any one but themselves, generally ascribed it to the banking system, which, though grievously abused, had been the main-spring of their progress, and the principal cause of their prosperity.[1]

Feb. 20, 1817.

[1] Chevalier's Voyage en Amerique, i. 45, 46.

6. Great prosperity of America from 1820 to 1835.

Great as these evils were—the unavoidable result of an immense issue of paper without either responsibility or control—they were in a considerable measure modified by the prudent conduct, high credit, and great influence of the United States Bank. Such was the effect of its general direction in banking affairs that all the disasters of the six years preceding 1820 were forgotten in the unbounded prosperity of the fifteen years which succeeded it. Although the United States shared to a certain degree in the commercial disasters consequent on the resumption of cash payments in Great Britain in 1819, and the consequent monetary crises of 1825 and 1832, yet this period was, upon the whole, one of extraordinary and unprecedented prosperity over their whole extent. Prices were

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

high, but wages were still higher; ease and contentment generally prevailed; cultivated land was encroaching at the rate of seventeen miles a-year over a frontier seventeen hundred miles in length, upon the gloom of the forest; and the seaport towns on the coast, sharing in the vast commerce which such a rapid increase of production required, were rapidly advancing in wealth, population, and enterprise. During these fifteen years the population of the United States advanced 65 per cent; its exports and imports doubled, and a vast stream of emigrants from the British Isles, which had come at last to be above 50,000 a-year, added to the prolific power of nature in providing hands to keep pace with this immense increase.* It is to the influence of the American banks in furnishing the means of cultivation and improvement to the hardy settlers in the forest, that the superior aspect of the American side of the St Lawrence to the British, which has attracted the notice of every traveller, is mainly to be ascribed.[1]

[1] Chevalier, i. 392-394.

As the paper currency of the United States has done such great things in sustaining and vivifying the industry of the country, it was not to be expected that it could

* Population of the United States.

1820,	9,638,226
1830,	12,853,838
1840,	17,068,660

—*American Census*, 1840.

Exports and Imports of the United States from 1824 to 1837.

	Imports. Dollars.	Exports. Dollars.
1824,	80,549,007	75,986,657
1825,	96,340,075	99,535,388
1826,	84,974,477	77,595,322
1827,	79,484,068	82,324,827
1828,	88,509,824	72,264,686
1829,	74,492,527	72,358,671
1830,	70,876,920	73,849,508
1831,	103,191,124	81,310,583
1832,	101,029,266	87,176,943
1833,	108,118,311	90,140,433
1834,	126,521,332	104,346,973
1835,	149,895,749	121,693,577
1836,	189,880,035	128,663,040

—Tooke's *History of Prices*, iv. 469.

7. Prudence, upon the whole, of the United States banks.

have been conducted without many instances of reckless, some of culpable, mismanagement. So great had the demand for money become in consequence of the immense undertakings which were everywhere going forward, that the discounts of the banks in the year 1831 had reached the enormous amount of 250,000,000 dollars, great part of which was discounted at the extravagant rate of 15, 18, and 20 per cent. On the 1st January 1835, there were in the United States 557 banks, besides 121 branches;* their capital was 231,250,000 dollars

* Number of Banks, Capital, Cash held by each, Bills under Discount, and Notes in circulation, on January 1, 1835, in all the States of the Union:—

States.	No. of Banks.	Capital.	Bills under Discount.	Notes in Circulation.	Specie.
		Dollars.	Dollars.	Dollars.	Dollars.
Maine, . . .	36	3,499,850	5,249,509	1,709,320	171,928
New Hampshire,	26	2,655,008	3,929,235	1,387,970	...
Vermont, . .	18	921,813	1,870,813	1,463,713	50,958
Massachusetts, .	105	30,409,450	48,901,142	7,868,472	1,180,564
Rhode Island, .	60	8,097,482	9,694,331	1,290,785	473,641
Connecticut, . .	31	7,350,766	8,899,656	2,685,400	129,108
New York, . .	87	31,581,460	62,775,200	16,427,963	7,221,335
New Jersey, . .	24	50,000	43,189	30,247	...
Pennsylvania, .	44	17,958,444	28,739,130	7,818,011	3,476,462
Delaware, . .	4	730,000	1,232,850	622,397	173,183
Maryland, . .	15	7,542,639	9,520,683	1,923,055	972,090
District Federal,	7	2,613,985	3,115,524	692,536	474,199
Virginia, . . .	5	5,840,000	11,277,304	5,595,198	1,160,401
North Carolina,	4	2,464,925	3,360,977	2,241,964	275,660
South Carolina,	8	2,156,318	3,886,441	2,288,030	754,219
Georgia, . . .	13	6,783,308	7,714,851	3,694,329	1,781,830
Florida, . . .	3	114,320	233,209	133,531	14,312
Alabama, . . .	2	5,607,623	9,219,586	3,472,413	916,135
Louisiana, . .	11	26,422,145	37,388,859	5,114,082	2,824,904
Mississippi, . .	5	5,890,162	10,379,650	2,418,475	359,302
Tennessee, . .	3	2,890,381	6,040,087	3,189,220	290,472
Kentucky, . .	6	4,898,685	7,674,066	2,771,154	872,368
Missouri, . . .	1	...	85,707	...	155,341
Illinois, . . .	1	278,739	313,902	178,810	243,225
Indiana, . . .	1	800,000	531,843	456,065	751,083
Ohio, ...	31	6,390,741	10,071,250	5,654,048	1,906,715
Michigan, . .	7	658,980	1,336,225	636,676	112,419
United States Bank, . . .	1	35,000,000	51,941,036	17,339,797	15,708,369
Unofficially reported, included in number of banks, . .		11,643,111	19,737,619	4,588,844	1,487,414
	557	231,250,337	365,163,834	103,692,495	43,937,625
In pounds sterling,		£57,812,334	£91,240,201	£25,923,124	£10,984,406

—Chevalier, i. 378.

The proportion of cash held by and notes in circulation of the Bank of

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

(£57,500,000), the notes they had in circulation amounted to 103,692,000 dollars (£25,500,000), their annual discounts were 365,143,000 dollars (£90,600,000), and the entire treasure in their vaults was 43,937,000 dollars, or £10,990,000. These figures demonstrate that, however reckless and extravagant the issue of some of these banks had been, yet their conduct upon the whole had been safe and judicious; for the proportion of notes issued to the gold and silver possessed, was, on the whole, as 11 to 26, or as 1 to 2¼;—a proportion greater than what has for a century been deemed necessary by the Scotch banks, whose prudence and good management have become proverbial; and more than triple the proportion of specie to notes out-held during the same period by the Bank of England.

8. Vast purchase of lands in the Far West with these notes.

One main use to which these large issues of the banks had been applied was in the purchase of waste lands on the frontier, which were in great part bought with advances made by banks established in the States to which the lands sold belonged. So rapid had been the progress of population and increase of cultivation on the frontiers of the forest, or in its recesses, that advances made on the security of lots purchased rarely proved unfortunate, the rise in the value of the lot bought increasing so rapidly as in a few years to much more than pay off the loan contracted. The territories at the disposal of the States were immense; they amounted to 990,000 square miles, or about 680,000,000 acres. Of these the Government, since 1784, had sold above 60,000,000, and the sales had of late years gone on increasing in an extraordinary progression: in seven

England, Scotch and Irish banks, on an average of the month preceding April 12, 1856, was as follows:—

	Notes issued.	Cash held.
Bank of England, . . .	£20,225,564	£9,806,880
Irish banks, ...	6,474,712	2,122,893
Scotch banks, ...	3,785,383	1,680,438
	£30,485,659	£13,610,211

Of the cash held by the Bank of England, £8,000,000 must be retained in the issue department; so that the real stock of bullion against £20,225,000 in notes was £1,806,000 in April 1856.—*London Gazette*, April 12 and May 2, 1856.

years succeeding 1828, their annual amount, and the price received for them, had risen to ten times its former amount.* But this was only the commencement of the great inroad of civilised man upon the forest; a progress twofold greater awaited him; and so rapid had been the rise in the value of land on the frontier, that nearly all who had engaged in it of late years had made money by their purchases—some great fortunes; and the banks which had advanced the money were in a state of unprecedented affluence. From this very prosperity arose the storm which ere long involved the United States in woe, and by its influence across the Atlantic produced effects of the last importance on the British empire.[1]

[1] Chevalier, i. 143, 409, 415.

9. Difference between the political feeling of landholders in Europe and America.

In the states of Europe—and the case had been the same in the Roman empire—the great landed estates in the country were originally acquired by the right of conquest. They were the grants made by a victorious chieftain to his followers; and though in many, perhaps most instances, they afterwards changed hands, and were acquired by commercial wealth, yet the purchasers rapidly acquired the feelings, and became actuated by the interests of the more elevated and dignified circle into which they had been admitted. Hence the majority of the landed aristocracy, both of new and old descent, is always conservative and monarchical in its ideas, and the elements of freedom and popular government first appear in the great hives of industry produced by manufacturing and commercial activity. The passing of the Reform Bill

* Quantities of Land sold and Price received in America.

	Acres.	Price received.
1828, . . .	750,000	£221,000
1829, . . .	1,260,000	324,000
1830, . . .	1,740,000	364,000
1831, . . .	2,500,000	694,000
1832, . . .	1,940,000	560,000
1833, . . .	4,500,000	845,000
1834, . . .	4,720,000	1,040,000
1835, . . .	7,500,000	2,480,000

—*Report of Secretary to the Treasury of the United States*, Dec. 8, 1835; and Chevalier, i. 413.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

was the first and greatest triumph of the latter over the former. In America the case is just the reverse. The aristocracy is there found in the towns, the democracy in the country. The reason is, that it is in the former alone that the means of making considerable fortunes existed. The forests being there pierced, and the wilds cultivated by the arms of laborious industry, not won by the sword of victorious conquest, it was soon found that the retention of land without its occupation was impossible. The feudal baron might do this, living in his strong castle, surrounded by his armed retainers; to the pacific colonist living in his log-house, and aided only by a few backwoodsmen, the thing was impossible. In all the colonies, accordingly, whether of America or Australia, the limits of retainable property have been found to be little beyond those of actual occupation; and all attempts to found great estates by the purchase or grants of large tracts of country, have been in the end defeated by the experienced impossibility of keeping off the squatters from tracts of good land not actually cleared, or about to be so, by the axe of the backwoodsman.

10. Aristocracy in America grew naturally in the towns.

Society being thus constituted by the strongest of all laws—that of necessity—the only places in which the growth of fortunes was practicable, were the towns, especially the commercial ones on the sea-coast. To them the vast progress of the back settlements, from the labour of the equal Anglo-Saxon freemen, afforded the greatest possible advantages: for the produce of their fields teeming with the riches of a virgin soil, afforded an immense amount of rude produce, which the wealth and redundant population of Europe were ever ready to take off; while their wants, even in a simple and primeval state of society, presented a vast and growing market for the manufacturing industry of the Old World. This was the secret of the great export of British manufactures to the United States, which had now come to amount to £12,000,000 declared value yearly; a quantity equal to what £24,000,000

would have been at the war prices. This prodigious traffic, the most important in which England was engaged, all passed through New York, Pennsylvania, Baltimore, New Orleans, Boston, and the other great towns on the sea-coast, and was of course in a great degree monopolised by the chief mercantile houses who possessed the capital or could command the credit necessary for carrying it on. To them, credit and an extensive paper currency were the condition of existence; they were as indispensable as the axe and the plough to the settlers in the Far West. As wealth flowed in rapidly to those who could command the assistance of this potent auxiliary, fortunes grew up rapidly, and with them the habits, interests, and desires of a mercantile aristocracy. CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

II. And democracy in the country.

But meanwhile the very reverse of all this obtained in the backwoods, where the market for this immense commerce was in process of formation. There the forest settlers, detached from each other, each cultivating his little freehold alone, were in habits of independence by the necessities of their situation. No aid from Government could be obtained on any emergency; no regular troops were at hand to aid in repelling an assault; no fortified place existed to serve as a place of refuge, or an asylum for their wives and children in case of disaster. In such circumstances, self-government became a habit, because self-defence was a necessity. The backwoodsmen, and the cultivators who succeeded to their cleared domains, accustomed to rely on their own resources, and to act for themselves in every emergency, required no aid from any superior power, and were not disposed to submit to any control. A feeling of independence, and a resolution to assert it alike against foreign invasion and domestic authority, arises inevitably and universally in the human mind in such circumstances. Accordingly, it had long been found that the representatives sent by the frontier States to the Congress were the most democratic, and the final ascendancy of their party has been

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

owing to the unparalleled growth of the population in the basin of the Mississippi, and beyond the Alleghany Mountains.

12. What renders party contests so violent in America.

A contest for the majority in the legislature, and the consequent command of the government, is a matter of far greater importance, and rouses the passions much more strongly in America than a similar conflict in the constitutional monarchies of Europe. The reason is, that, owing to the republican form of government, a much greater number of persons are interested in, and hope to profit by it. The majority in Congress being determined by the votes of between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 of voters in the State, and *no other influence*, parties have long felt the necessity of rousing the multitude to their support by offering to them not merely the empty honours, but the substantial fruits of victory. This is effected by an immense multiplication of offices more highly paid as they descend in the scale, and come within the reach of the democracy, and a rigorous change of their occupants when a change in government takes place. It is calculated that there were, in 1837, 60,000 offices in America at the disposal of the executive, all of which are changed on a change of ministry. Thus the voters have an immense number of offices to look for in the event of their party gaining the ascendancy in Congress. This vast multiplication of offices is not complained of, because each party hopes to profit by it—just as in England we hear nothing of the evils of patronage, at least from the popular press, when their party are in power, and it is showered down upon themselves. These offices are the allotment of the conquered lands, the prospect of which so vehemently excited the Roman soldiery, and the contest for which, under the name of an agrarian law, at length occasioned the ruin of the republic.[1]

[1] De Tocqueville de l'Amerique, ii. 284-287; Chevalier, i. 137, 153.

As there were no great landed proprietors in America, and commercial wealth alone could form the basis of an aristocracy, the banks in the great towns, especially on the

sea-coast, early excited the jealousy of the ambitious democrats in the interior. Being composed of hard-headed practical men, and led by chiefs of acknowledged ability, they were not long in perceiving that it was the system of credit built upon the advances made by these banks, that was the foundation on which the commercial aristocracy, which had often ruled the Union, and got the command of the numerous offices at the disposal of the executive, rested. If they could only destroy the banks, the axe would be laid to the root of the commercial aristocracy, as completely as it would to an army if you cut off its supplies. When this desirable consummation was effected, no obstacle would remain to their undisputed and permanent government of the republic, and enjoyment of its fruits. With the usual selfishness and blindness of faction, they resolved to prosecute their object with all their forces, regardless of its inevitable consequences, and careless although the branch they were in such haste to cut away should be that on which they themselves sat. They were not long in effecting their object, and bringing that ruin upon their country, and elevation to themselves, which might reasonably have been expected from their proceedings.

13. General jealousy of the banks on the part of the democratic party.

GENERAL JACKSON was at this period the President of the Republic, an eminence which he had attained in consequence of his successful defence of the lines before New Orleans against the English in 1814. He was the head of the democratic party by whom he had been placed in power, and being a violent party-man, without commercial interests or connections, he determined to follow out the wishes of his constituents without any regard to the effects of the measures they advocated upon the general prosperity of the Union, or even their own ultimate interests. To effect this object, a crusade was set on foot against the banks, and especially that of the United States, in which the press took the lead. Three-fourths of the 1265 journals which at that period

14. General Jackson: his measures against the banks.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

were published in the United States, were enlisted in the war against the banks. This is nothing extraordinary: the press invariably fans the passions of the moment, and follows the wishes of the numerical majority of its readers. By this means, and the unceasing activity of the whole political agents of the majority over the Union, the people beyond the sphere of the commercial towns were worked up to a state of perfect frenzy against the banks; and General Jackson's war against the United States banks was regarded with as much enthusiasm as ever his defence of New Orleans had been. Since the fervour of France in 1789, and of England in 1832, nothing in the world had been seen like it. The cry "Bank or no Bank!" convulsed the Union as violently as that of "Liberté et Egalité!" had done France, or "The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill!" had shaken England.[1]

[1] Chevalier, i. 66, 67, 389.

15. Ostensible and real grounds of complaint against the banks.

The ostensible grounds of complaint preferred by the President against the banks were—1st, That they had intrigued to obtain the renewal of their charter during the session 1831-2, in order either to force him to consent to it, or throw all their adherents into opposition to him at the next election. 2d, That they had exerted their influence against him in the election of 1832, and increased their discounts by 28,500,000 dollars to augment their own. 3d, That they had corrupted the press, especially in the commercial towns, to support their cause. The banks answered—1st, That the President had, in his opening address to the Congress in 1831, recommended the bank question to their consideration, with a view to its early decision. 2d, That the increase of their discounts had been no more than was required by the extension and necessities of commerce. 3d, That being menaced with destruction from a powerful party in the State, with the President at its head, they were perfectly entitled to defend themselves at the bar of public opinion, and that no way of doing that could be so safe and legitimate as reprinting the speeches of enlightened men

in their favour, which was all they had done. These were the ostensible grounds of debate between the parties; the real causes of discord were very different, and were as carefully concealed as the pretended ones were ostentatiously put forward. They were the inherent jealousy, on the one hand, of democracy at eminence foreign to itself, whether in rank, fortune, genius, learning, or accomplishment; and the vanity of newborn wealth on the other, which sought to overbear all other interests in the State by the sway of capital, and had imprudently let fall hints, that the time was not far distant when, by means of the influence of mercantile advances, they would gain the entire command of the State.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1833, 469; 1834, 467. Chevalier, i. 64, 69.

16. Enmity of the Democrats provoked by the extension of banks in the back settlements.

The democratic party were the more alarmed at the growing influence of the bank interest in the Union, from the vast extension of paper advances which had recently taken place for the purchase of lots of waste lands in the back settlements. These rude agricultural districts, the cradles of a sturdy and robust democracy, had hitherto been their stronghold, and enabled them, by their rapid extension, to outvote the commercial towns on the coast, which were for the most part in the opposite interest. But when banks were established in all the back settlements, and made liberal advances to settlers to enable them to purchase lots of the public lands, upon the security of the deposit of their title-deeds, this source of power was likely not only to be lost to them, but gained to their enemies. It is well known that there is no influence so difficult to resist as that of a creditor; and when nearly all the settlers on the frontier in the valley of the Mississippi had purchased their freeholds with money advanced by banks with whom their title-deeds were deposited, it was easy to see that a great, and to the Democrats most alarming, source of influence was opened up in what had hitherto been the centre of their power. Had the Government

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

been animated by a real patriotic spirit, what they should have done, obviously, was to have retained the credit system, under which the nation had made such unparalleled progress, but put it under such regulations as should have checked the over-issue of paper, and secured the stability of such as was in circulation. But being actuated, not by the enlightened spirit of patriotism, but the blind passions of faction, they did just the reverse, and adopted a course of measures which brought ruin upon the banks, bankruptcy and desolation upon the country, and the effects of which, extending beyond the Atlantic, produced a crisis of the most terrible kind in Great Britain, a crisis which was the main cause of the long-continued suffering which terminated in the entire change of her commercial policy.

17. Commencement of the contest. Jackson vetoes the bill for the renewal of the Bank Charter.

The charter of the United States Bank being only for twenty years from 1816, the directors of that establishment, under the direction of their able chairman Mr Biddle, brought forward a bill in 1832 to authorise the renewal of the charter for the like term of years. This was the signal for the deadly strife which ensued. War to the knife was immediately proclaimed by the whole democratic party over the Union, not only against the United States Bank, but against *all the banks* in the country, no matter how long their establishment, how high their credit, how widespread their beneficence. The creatures of their bounty, the citizens who owed their all to their courageous enterprise, the holders of fields won from the forest by their advances, were the first, like the serpent in the fable, when warmed into life, to sting their benefactors. The legislature, however, took a more enlightened view of the subject, and after the publication of very able reports, which went fully into the subject, both houses of Congress passed the bill, renewing the charter of the United States Bank by considerable majorities. But the democratic party were not discouraged. Secure of the concurrence of General

March 7, 1832.

Jackson, the President, they raised such a clamour against the Bank in the newspapers, that he was induced to oppose the VETO which the constitution intrusted to him to the bill. It was the old story of Rome over again: democratic ambition, led on by a dictator, was crushing the aristocracy of property and intelligence.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1832, 279; 1833, 299, 300.

Not content with putting a negative on the act passed by the Congress renewing the bank charter, General Jackson, in the succeeding year, went a step farther, and took the very hazardous step of withdrawing the whole public deposits from the United States Bank and its branches, and handing them over to the local banks.* No step could be imagined more hazardous in a mercantile point of view, as it implied such a serious distrust of the solvency of the first banking establishment in the country, as could hardly fail to shake its stability and that of all similar establishments; but as a mere party-move, it was well conceived, as it tended to divide the banking interest, and give the local banks, which got the deposits on interest, to remain at least neuter in the effort to destroy the United States Bank, from which they had been taken. Once taken, however, the decisive step was attended by the effects which might have been anticipated. The

18. Withdrawal of the public deposits from the United States Bank, Sept. 18, 1833.

* The principal charge brought against the Bank, in a paper justifying this step, published on 18th September 1833, was this: "Although the charter of the Bank was approaching its termination, and the Bank was aware it was the intention of Government to use the public deposits as fast as they accrued in the payment of the public debt, yet it did extend its loans, from January 1831 to May 1832, from 32,402,304 dollars to 70,428,070 dollars, being an increase of 28,056,766 dollars in sixteen months. It is confidently believed that the leading object of this immense extension of its loans was to bring as large a portion of the people *under its power and influence as possible*, and it has been disclosed that some of the largest loans were granted on very unusual terms to conductors of the public press. In some of these cases, the motives were made manifest by the nominal or insufficient security taken for the loans, by the large amounts discounted, by the extraordinary time allowed for payment, and especially by the subsequent conduct of those receiving the accommodation." It was to compel the President to take his stand that the bill was brought forward for the renewal of the Bank Charter at the time it was. He met the challenge, willingly took the position into which his adversaries sought to force him, and frankly declared his unalterable opposition to the Bank, as being both unconstitutional and inexpedient.—GENERAL JACKSON'S *Memoir*, Sept. 18, 1832; *Ann. Reg.* 1833, p. 300, note.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

United States Bank, thus violently assailed, and openly charged with insolvency by the Government, was compelled, in its own defence, suddenly, and to a great extent, to contract its operations. This, like all similar changes brought about in the midst of a period of high prosperity and great undertakings, gave a violent shock to credit, produced a similar contraction of issues on the part of all other banks, and speedily spread embarrassment and insolvency throughout the community. These disasters were immediately taken advantage of by the democratic party, who represented them as the fatal result of the banking system, when, in fact, it was the consequence of the impediment thrown in the way of its operations,—as the effect of the extension of credit, when, in truth, it was so of its contraction.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1833, 299, 300; Chevalier, i. 66, 67.

19. Which is approved of by the House of Representatives, and condemned by the Senate.

These violent stretches on the part of the democratic President caused, as soon as Congress met, stormy debates in both houses, which were contemporaneous with meetings on the subject, when the most violent language was used on both sides in every part of the Union. The House of Representatives, by a majority of 15 in a house of 240, approved of the measures of the President, and passed resolutions, that the charter of the Bank should not be renewed, and that the public deposits should not be restored to it. On the other hand, the Senate, by a majority of 26 in a house of 46, voted "that the President, in the late executive proceedings, had assumed to himself authority and power not conferred by the constitution and laws, but in derogation of both." * Thus the two houses, as in England on the Reform Bill, were brought into direct collision; and this was the more serious, that the Senate shared with the President the executive authority, and formed the court before which he

* The Senate in the United States consists of forty-eight members, two for each state of the Union, elected by their *legislatures*. The House of Representatives is elected by the direct suffrage of the inhabitants. From the former being the result of a double election, it is in general more identified with the interests of property than the latter, chosen directly by universal suffrage.

was appointed by the constitution to be tried, if charged with malversation in office. So determined were the senators in their condemnation of the measures of the President, that they refused to receive, or put upon their journals, a protest and explanatory memoir, which he drew up and published in defence of his proceedings. A similar division was observed in all the States, among whose inhabitants meetings took place everywhere, to consider the all-engrossing topic. Generally speaking, the States on the coast coincided with the Senate, those beyond the Alleghany Mountains and in the Far West with the House of Representatives. The weight of intellect was decidedly with the former: Mr Clay, Mr Webster, and Mr Calhoun, made powerful speeches in favour of the Bank. But what the democratic orators wanted in argument they made up in violence, which was more powerful with the unthinking multitude. To find a parallel to the vehemence of their harangues, we must go back to the ardent declamations of the French Republicans in 1791 and 1792. The topics, the ideas, were the same; the objects of the animosity only were different. It was not the landed "aristocrats," but the "commercial aristocracy," which was the object of ceaseless obloquy. The corruption, selfishness, seduction, and despotic views of the monied class, were the subject of incessant declamation, and not a few declared that Mr Biddle would end by making himself king.[1]

In the mean time the general shake given to commercial credit by the open war, declared by a numerical majority in the Union, with the President at its head, against the United States Bank, produced the most disastrous effects, far exceeding in intensity anything which the promoters of the war contemplated. Mr Cobbett addressed a long letter to General Jackson, congratulating him on the success of his efforts to destroy the United States Bank; the first step, it was to be hoped, to the destruction of all other banks. The whole banks throughout the Union,

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

seeing the violence of the storm which was brewing against them, adopted the most stringent measures in their own defence; they rapidly contracted their issues, and made the most strenuous efforts to augment their metallic reserves. The consequence was, that gold rose so much in value in the Union, that it flowed into the country to an unprecedented extent; and the excess imported over that exported, from 1st January 1833 to 1st July 1834, amounted to £5,501,000. In the chief States of the Union the result was, that a metallic was in a great degree substituted for a paper currency; but as its amount was not a third of what the bank-notes had been, the utmost distress and anxiety pervaded the Union, and in the State of New York it rose to such a pitch, that the local legislature authorised a State loan, to the banks in the province, of £1,500,000, to enable them to continue the most necessary advances.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1834, 468, 469; Chev. i. 81-83, 95-96, 103.

21. New York in vain petitions in favour of the Bank.

Struck with consternation at this succession of commercial disasters, the merchants and bankers of New York had a meeting, at which a petition to the President was agreed to, which soon received ten thousand signatures, embracing the whole wealth and intelligence of the place, in favour of the Bank. General Jackson received it, and coolly answered, that he believed "the petition expressed the sentiments of Wall Street and Pearl Street, but that Wall Street and Pearl Street were not the people of America."* He was right; for although New York was the chief commercial city of the Union, and had increased tenfold in population and an hundredfold in riches within the last fifty years, and converted the wilderness, an hundred leagues around, into fruitful fields, yet there can be no doubt that a majority of the Union, *told by head*, was on the opposite side, and cordially supported the President in his crusade—not only in his crusade against the United States Bank, but almost *all* the banks in the

* The Regent Street and Lombard Street of New York, where the chief banking houses and most splendid shops are to be found.

country. It was generally believed, and it was generally told, that the banks were a set of infamous usurers, determined to starve the noble soldiers of independence; and the cry was general with the populace in all parts of the Union, "Hurrah for Jackson! down with the Bank." [1]

[1] 1 Chev. i. 103-106.

22. Increased hostility of General Jackson the Bank.

Such was the effect of this cry, with which the United States were so convulsed that the people entirely lost their senses, and ran headlong, despite all the warnings of Mr Webster and Mr Clay, on their own destruction. By the elections in the autumn of 1834, the majority of General Jackson was increased in the House of Representatives by twenty votes. Strengthened by this accession of numbers, the President continued with increased vehemence his hostility to the Bank, and early in the session of 1835 recommended, in his Message to the Congress, that its notes should *not be received in payment of taxes*, and that all laws connecting the Bank, directly or indirectly, with the Government should be repealed. How strongly soever the Bank party was intrenched in the upper house, they felt it in vain to continue the contest any longer, for their charter would expire next year, and it could only be renewed by an act of both houses, which could not now be looked for, as the last election had made the majority of the President in the lower beyond the reach of resistance. They therefore bent to the storm which they could not resist, and took steps to wind up their affairs with as little detriment to the community as possible. This was immediately set about, and the Bank disposed of its debts at and closed twenty-one out of its twenty-seven branches. The winding-up of its affairs which then took place proved its credit beyond a doubt; for its assets were 49,313,000 dollars, and its liabilities only 27,656,000; and to meet 22,113,000 in notes, it had 8,749,000 in specie in its coffers! [2]

[2] Ann. Reg. 1835, 504, 505.

Cut off from their connection with the State, and deprived of all hope of a renewal of their charter from the

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

legislature, the directors of the United States Bank obtained a charter from the local legislature of Pennsylvania, to which they paid a bonus of 2,000,000 dollars; and though they experienced great opposition from the banks in the western States, which at first refused to take their notes, they succeeded, in spite of all the opposition of the President, in establishing an extensive business. But now appeared the fatal effects of the measures adopted by Government to destroy the United States Bank. The States in the valley of the Mississippi, encouraged by the support of Government, and strong in the possession, through their banks, of the public deposits, rushed, as it were, with inconsiderate fury into the void created by the contraction of the business of the United States Bank, which had been conducted with comparative prudence. It was soon seen what free trade in banking will speedily become. The President had sought to destroy one bank, of which he was jealous, on the coast: he did so; but in so doing he reared up an hundred far more perilous in the Far West. Indiana, Ohio, Massachusetts, Alabama, Maine, created new banks with surprising rapidity, which instantly began issuing notes, on the security of the title-deeds of lots of purchased lands. New York, in three days, erected banks with six millions of dollars as capital. Money was freely advanced, but such was the demand for it that 2 per cent *a-month* was usually asked and given. The law against issuing notes below £1 was generally evaded in the frontier States. Land in the back settlements was sold and resold in lots to such an extent that it became a mere stock-jobbing concern, without any intention, on the part of most of the purchasers, of any settlement. The effect of his own measures cannot be better described than by the President himself, in his Message to the Congress at the end of 1835.[1]

23. Increased banking mania in the West.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1836, 442-444.

"The effect," said he, "of the over-extension of bank

credits and over-issue of paper have been strikingly exemplified in the sales of the public lands. From the returns made by the receivers in the early part of last summer, it appeared that the receipts arising from the sale of the public lands were increasing to an unprecedented amount. In effect, however, these receipts amounted to nothing more than credits in bank. The banks lent out their notes to speculators; they were paid to the receivers, and immediately returned to the banks to be lent out again and again, being mere instruments to transfer to speculators the most valuable public land, and pay the Government by a credit on the books of a bank. These credits on the books of some of the western banks were already beyond their immediate means of payment, and were rapidly increasing. Indeed, each speculation furnished means for another; for no sooner had one individual or company paid in the notes than they were immediately lent to another for a like purpose; and the banks were extending their business and their issues so largely as to alarm considerate men, and render it doubtful whether these bank credits, if allowed to accumulate, would be of the least value to the Government. The spirit of expansion and speculation was not confined to the deposit banks, but pervaded the whole multitude of banks throughout the Union, and was giving rise to new institutions to aggravate the evil." Such is General Jackson's own account of the *first* effect of his crusade against the United States Bank.[1]

24. The President's account of the operations of the western banks.

[1] General Jackson's Message, Dec. 20, 1835; Ann. Reg. 1836, 444.

Independently of the obvious dangers of such a system of rash speculation, fed by imprudent advances by irresponsible banks, as is here described, there were other and still more pressing reasons which rendered it peculiarly alarming to the democratic party in the United States. The Far West had hitherto been their main support, but by means of these banks a monied interest was arising in these, which would speedily by its influ-

25. Treasury order regarding cash payment for public lands.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

ence win over to the commercial aristocracy the sturdy cultivators who were clearing its wilds, and by their increasing numbers determine the majority of the Congress. There was not a moment to lose—the next election might turn the majority in the House of Representatives the other way, and give the commercial aristocracy the command of the Union. In this crisis the measures of the President were characterised by his usual decision and recklessness of consequences. Of his own authority as President he issued a treasury circular, prohibiting the receivers of the price of public lands sold from *taking anything but specie* in payment of lots sold, with the exception to 15th December, of sales to actual settlers and occupants of the land. It is worthy of remark, that in the same official message which announced this determination, the revenue of the Union was stated at 47,691,000 dollars, of which 22,523,000 were drawn from customs, and 24,000,000 *from sales of land*, while its expenditure was only 22,000,000. Thus *more than half* of the public revenue was derived from the much decried sales of lands supported by the banks; and it was from them, and them alone, that the funds were derived which paid off the whole public debt of the Union, at the same time the subject of just congratulation to the Government.[1]

July 11, 1836.

[1] General Jackson's Message, Dec. 6, 1836; Ann. Reg. 1836.

26. Mr Biddle's description of the effects of these measures.

The effect of this decisive step on the part of the President of the United States was thus described by Mr Biddle, the President of the United States Bank: "The interior banks making no loans, and converting their Atlantic funds into specie, the debtors in the interior could make no remittances to the merchants of the Atlantic cities, who are thus thrown for support upon the banks of those cities at a moment when they are unable to afford relief on account of this very abstraction of specie to the West. The creditor States not only receive no money, but their money is carried away to the debtor

States, who in turn cannot use it either to pay old debts or to contract new. By this unnatural process the specie of New York and the other commercial cities *is piled up in the western States*—not circulated, not used, but *held as a defence against the Treasury;* and while the West cannot use it, the East is suffering from the want of it. The result is, that the commercial intercourse between the East and the West is almost suspended, and the few operations which are made are burdened with the most extravagant expense. In November 1836 the interest of money had risen to 24 per cent; merchants were struggling to preserve their credit by various sacrifices; and it cost six times as much to transmit funds from the West and the South-west as it did in 1832, 1834, or 1835. Then, while the exchanges with all the world are in our favour—while Europe is alarmed and the Bank of England itself uneasy at the quantity of specie which we possess—we are suffering because, from mere mismanagement, the whole ballast of the currency is shifted from one side of the vessel to the other." [1]

[1] Mr Biddle's Statement, Jan. 18, 1837; Ann. Reg. 1837, 363.

27. Disastrous effects of this state of things.

The effect of this state of things was to the very last degree disastrous in every part of the United States. The whole bullion of the country was withdrawn from the commercial cities on the coast, where it was essential to support the banks and regulate the exchanges, and thrown, as Government deposits, to stagnate unemployed in the vaults of remote provincial banks. The gold and silver so abstracted from the great commercial cities found no channels for return; for when the western banks began to restrict their loans, the merchants in these parts were deprived of the means of making remittances; and the proceeds of the goods remitted to them, having been for the most part invested in the purchase of land, were now locked up in the banks to meet the Treasury orders. Thus credit was destroyed, and transactions of all sorts were stopped alike in the

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

cities on the coast and the forests in the interior. The banks, compelled to pay in specie by the existing law, could get none, and their only resource was sternly to refuse accommodation even to houses of the first respectability. Terror and distrust universally prevailed; the machine of society, like a huge mill turned by water which was suddenly frozen, came to a stand.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1837, 362-364.

28. Universal ruin which ensued in America.

General Jackson retired from office, having served his time, in March 1837, and was succeeded by Mr Van Buren. He might boast with justice that he had inflicted, during his official career, an amount of ruin and misery on his country unparalleled in any other age or country. The catastrophe, inevitable from the circular of July 11, 1836, was for a short period kept off by the expedient adopted by the chief merchants and bankers in New York and Philadelphia, of drawing bills at twelve months on certain great houses in London and Liverpool which accepted them, and on which cash was raised in the mean time. But this expedient only postponed, it did not avert the disaster; England itself, as will immediately appear, was involved in the consequences of the crusade against paper raised in the United States; the acceptors for the most part failed before the bills became due; and the crash set in with unexampled severity in March 1837. It first began in New Orleans, in consequence of the great transactions in cotton of that place with Great Britain, but rapidly spread to New York, Philadelphia, and the other cities on the coast, and the scene of confusion and panic which ensued baffles all description. A universal run took place upon the banks, which being in a great degree unprovided with cash, in consequence of its having been drained away to the banks in the West, were unable to meet the demand for specie. They all, including the United States Bank, accordingly soon suspended cash payments, and upon this the panic became universal, and the crash as widespread. Deprived of the wonted resource of discounted bills to meet their engagements,

the greatest as well as the smallest houses in all the commercial cities became bankrupt. Two hundred and fifty houses stopped payment in New York in the first three weeks of April; and in Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and the other cities on the coast, the devastation was not less universal. Cotton fell from 14d. the lb. in 1835 to 7½d.; all other articles of export in a similar proportion. "Soon the distress spread like a pestilence through the various ramifications of society. Public works, railways, canals, were brought to a stand; the shipwright and builder dismissed their men, the manufacturer closed his doors; one sentiment pervaded all classes—the anticipation of universal ruin and individual beggary.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1837, 370; Tooke on Prices, ii. 401.

29. Universal bankruptcy, and increased measures against the banks.

As usual in such cases, when the madness of a party has induced general ruin, the authors of the catastrophe strove to lay the blame of it upon their opponents, and were only the more confirmed in their resolution to persevere in their career, by the proof which had been afforded of its disastrous effects. The merchants of New York presented a petition to the President, praying him to retrace his steps, relax the laws as to the payment of the price of lands sold, and convoke Congress to consider what means could be devised to alleviate the public distress. They met only with a stern refusal. The calamities which prevailed were ascribed entirely to the mania of speculation and overtrading; the "mercantile aristocracy" were signalised as the authors of all the public misfortunes; and the deposit banks were charged with "base treachery and perfidy unparalleled in the history of the world, all purely with the *view of gratifying Biddle and the Barings.*" At the same time, to evince his determination to persist in the career of his predecessor, Van Buren issued a circular to the different collectors of the revenue in the United States, to *receive nothing but specie,* or notes of banks still paying in specie, in payment of revenue bonds or debts

May 15, 1837.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

due to the States. But it was easier to issue such a circular than give the means of complying with it; and the public revenue, entirely dependent on the custom-house duties and the sale of the public lands, almost entirely disappeared. Within six months after the general suspension of cash payments, it was found that not more than *five* per cent of the sums due on the public debts had been paid to the collectors; the Government, without a revenue, were compelled to bring in a bill authorising them to appropriate 9,367,214 dollars lying in the Treasury—which, under the existing law of 23d June 1836, should have been distributed among the States—and give them Treasury bonds instead. Thus the first effect of General Jackson's crusade against the banks was to spread universal bankruptcy through the States, and convert the surplus of 24,000,00 dollars in the public revenue of preceding years into a deficit of above 9,000,000 dollars in this. So strong was the current of general opinion in consequence against the measures of Government, that in the next election of the provincial legislature of New York, instead of 94 Van Buren men to 34 Opposition, there were 27 of the former to 101 of the latter; and the same change was observable in Pennsylvania, Georgia, New Jersey, and many other States.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1837, 370, 371, 383; Ann. Hist. xx. 751-753; President's Message, 1837; Ann. Reg. 1837, 355.

30. Increased straits of Government, and ruin of the revenue.

So strong was the sense of the ruinous effect of the crusade against the banks, that the elections in the next year ran generally against the Government, insomuch that Van Buren's re-election to the office of President became doubtful. So utterly was Government bereaved of money, that they were reduced to the necessity of issuing Treasury bills to the amount of 10,000,000 dollars more, which was justified to the public upon the humiliating confession, that above 28,000,000 dollars was due to Government by State banks of deposit, and 15,000,000 by private banks and individuals, and that it could recover no part of these sums; a state of things, it

is believed, unparalleled in any other age or country.* Notwithstanding all this, and though they themselves were the greatest sufferers from their own measures, the Government, trusting to a majority of ten in the House of Representatives, still clung with invincible tenacity to the measures of hostility to the banks, grounded avowedly on their jealousy of the weight and influence which the banks, from their vast capital and liberal advances, had acquired in the country, and which threatened to wrest the sceptre of government from the republicans.[1] †

[1] Ann. Reg. 1838, 489, 490.

31. Increased crisis in 1838 and 1839 in the United States.

The suspension of the crisis by the issue of the long-dated bills accepted by the English houses, proved, as already mentioned, only temporary. Such was the scarcity of specie, in consequence of its being locked up in the western banks, that the banks on the coast were compelled to apply to England for assistance before they could resume cash payments; and the Bank of England, with praiseworthy liberality, in April 1838, remitted the United States Bank £1,000,000 in specie. This enabled them to resume payments in specie, and recommence operations on a large scale, which soon restored credit, as all the other banks did the same. Their efforts were immediately directed to arrest the fall in the price of cotton, the great article of common export, which had fallen, in consequence of the measures of the Government, to 4d. a pound,

* "I submit to the consideration of Congress a statement prepared by the Secretary to the Treasury, by which it appears that the United States, with over 28,000,000 dollars in deposit with the States, and over 15,000,000 dollars due from individuals and banks, are, from the situation in which these funds are placed, in immediate danger of being unable to discharge with good faith and promptitude the various pecuniary obligations of the Government."—President's Message, April 5, 1838; *Ann. Reg.* 1838, 490.

† "The number of State banks and branches is now 829. The number of presidents, directors, and other officers, is not over-estimated at 8200. The number of holders of bank stock may be safely estimated at 320,000, and the number of debtors, exclusive of stockholders, at 65,000. The capital of all the banks is about 317,636,770 dollars, and the amount of their loans is 485,631,867 dollars. If the minor banks were to act in subservience to the monarch of the great banking system, on whom the inexorable laws of credit and of trade confer the power to crush or caress them according to his uncontrollable will, who could withstand them?"—Address of Republican Members of Congress, July 6, 1838; *Ann. Reg.* 1838, p. 491.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

being *not a third* of what it had been three years before, and that although the last crop had been deficient rather than the reverse. For this purpose they made immense advances on long-dated bills, drawn on and accepted by houses in England to the holders of cotton, to prevent their stock being forced into the English market at these ruinously low prices.* The operation, which was indispensable to arrest the ruin of the country, succeeded for a time, and prices of cotton rose considerably in the first half of 1839; but, unhappily, the crash which ensued at that time in England utterly destroyed the means of carrying it forward. The Bank of England itself, as will immediately appear, nearly as hard pressed as the banks of America, was obliged, in the autumn of 1839, rapidly and rigidly to contract its advances; the houses which had accepted the long-dated bills became bankrupt; and the consequence was, that the crash came on again in America, after this vain attempt to arrest it, with more severity than ever. The United States Bank stopped payment, finally and irrecoverably, on the 5th October; all the other banks, in the southern States of the Union, suspended cash payments; and before the end of the year, nine-tenths of the whole commercial houses in America were bankrupt, and nearly the whole commercial wealth of the country was swept away.[1]

Oct. 5, 1839.

[1] Tooke on Prices, ii. 401, iii. 59; Ann. Reg. 1839, 425.

32. Disastrous effect of these measures on the United States.

So far the design of the democrats had been entirely successful; the crusade against property had accomplished all for which it was intended. The banks were ruined; the "commercial aristocracy," the object of so much jealousy, was destroyed; all effectual resistance to democratic rule in the legislature was at an end. The little uninformed sturdy voters in the western States had

* Prices of Cotton.

	August 3, 1835.	August 3, 1838.	August 3, 1839.
Upland,	11d. to 1s. 2d.	5½d. to 7½d.	7½d. to 9d.
Surats,	9d. to 1s. 2d.	4d. to 5¼d.	4¾d. to 6¼d.

—Tooke *On Prices*, ii. 401.; iii. 59.

now got the entire command of the country. Immense was the effect of this change upon the government and policy of America; the revolution was as great and irremediable as that of 1789 had been in France—that of 1832 in Great Britain. But at what price was this victory gained? At that of the national wealth, the national happiness, the national honour. Foreign commerce was almost destroyed; that with England was reduced to little more than *a fourth* of its former amount.* The embarrassment in the interior, from the failure of the customs and the diminished sales of the public lands, became so great that payment of public debts was impossible, since no legislator had ever ventured, for general and national objects, to pronounce the words *direct taxation.* Thence the REPUDIATION OF STATE DEBTS, which, as will hereafter appear, became general in the United States, and has affixed a lasting and ineffaceable stain on the national honour, and on the character of the people for common honesty. Thence, too, has arisen a grasping disposition on the part of the ruling multitude, who sought in foreign conquest an escape from the consequences of domestic mismanagement, which has brought them into constant broils with their neighbours in every direction, and made "filibustering" abroad as common as repudiation of debts at home.† Such have been the direct and

* EXPORTS OF GREAT BRITAIN TO THE UNITED STATES FROM 1835 TO 1842.

1835, . .	£10,568,459	1839, . .	£8,839,204
1836, . .	12,425,604	1840, . .	5,283,020
1837, . .	4,695,225	1841, . .	7,098,842
1838, . .	7,585,761	1842, . .	3,528,807

—*Parl. Papers*, 27th May 1840, and 20th July 1843.

† "Our progress in prosperity has indeed been the wonder of the world, but this prosperity has done much to counteract the ennobling influences of free institutions. The peculiar circumstances of the country and of our times have poured in upon us a torrent of wealth, and human nature has not been strong enough for the assault of such severe temptation. Prosperity has become dearer than freedom. Government is regarded more as a means of enriching the country than of securing private rights. We have become wedded to gain as our chief good. That under the predominance of this degrad-

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

immediate effects of the ascendancy of numbers over property, and the unchecked sway of the majority in the Government.

33. Effect of these changes in America on England.

Connected with the United States by a traffic which had come to reach £12,000,000 a-year, it was impossible that Great Britain should not feel in the highest degree the consequences of this long-continued train of disasters, produced by the crusade of the democratic party against the banks in America. It produced effects, accordingly, of lasting importance on this side of the Atlantic, and which render an account of these Transatlantic proceedings a necessary prelude to the narrative of the great social changes ere long to commence in England. But independent of this cause of paramount importance and irresistible force, there were other causes tending to the same result in the British Islands, and which, acting

ing passion, the higher virtues, the moral independence, the simplicity of manners, the stern uprightness, the self-reverence, the respect for man as man, which are the ornaments and safeguards of a republic, should wither and give place to selfish calculation and indulgence, to show and extravagance, to anxious, envious, discontented strivings, to wild adventure, and to the gambling spirit of speculation, will surprise no one who has studied human nature. The invasion of Texas by our citizens is a mournful comment on our national morality. Whether without some fiery trial, some signal prostration of our prosperity, we can rise to the force and self-denial of freemen, is a question not easily solved.

"There are other alarming views. A spirit of lawlessness pervades the community, which, if not repressed, threatens the dissolution of our present forms of society. Even in the old States, mobs are taking the government into their hands, and a profligate newspaper finds little difficulty in stirring up multitudes to violence. When we look at the parts of the country nearest to Texas, we see the arm of the law paralysed by the passions of the individual—men taking under their own protection the rights which it is the very office of government to secure. The citizen, wearing arms as means of defence, carries with him perpetual proofs of the weakness of the authorities under which he lives. The substitution of self-constituted tribunals for the regular course of justice, and the infliction of immediate punishment in the moment of popular frenzy, are symptoms of a people half reclaimed from barbarism. I know not that any civilised country on earth has exhibited during the last year a spectacle so atrocious as the burning of a coloured man, by a slow fire, in the neighbourhood of St Louis! and this infernal sacrifice was offered not by a few fiends selected from the whole country, but by a crowd gathered from a single spot."
—Dr CHANNING to Mr CLAY, August 18, 1837.

upon the currency, the main-spring for good or for evil of the national fortunes, produced effects second only to those of the Reform Bill in consequence and durability. It is time to resume the narrative of these all-important events.

34. Excess of imports over exports.

The first was the excess of imports over exports in Great Britain, in consequence of the continued prosperity and fine harvests of the three preceding years. It has been already mentioned, that in consequence of the uncommonly fine seasons from 1832 to 1835, the importation of grain had entirely disappeared, and the nation had become self-supporting. In addition to this, these years had been so prosperous from other causes already detailed, that a great balance of imports over exports had come to take place. This balance had come, in the year 1837, to be no less than £12,000,000; and it of course required to be paid wholly, or at least chiefly, in gold or silver.* This state of things is the inevitable result of a prosperous course of years, and its inevitable consequence a great domestic consumption, acting upon a currency dependent upon the retention of gold. There

* Exports and Imports from 1837 to 1842.

Years.	Imports. Official Value.	Exports. Declared Value.	Difference.
1837	£54,737,301	£42,069,245	£12,669,056
1838	61,268,320	50,060,970	11,207,350
1839	62,004,000	53,233,580	8,770,420
1840	67,432,964	51,406,430	16,036,534
1841	64,377,962	51,634,623	12,743,338
1842	65,204,729	47,381,023	17,823,706

—Porter's *Progress of the Nation*, 3d edit., p. 356.

It is true, the imports here are calculated according to the official, and the exports according to the declared value. But that the official value of the imports was not materially different from the real, is proved by the fact that, from 1797 down to 1819, the official value of exports exceeded their real value. In 1819, for the first time, the scale turned: the official value of exports in that year was £33,534,176; the real value £35,208,321. So great and decisive had since that time been the effect of the contraction of the currency in lowering the prices of manufactured goods, that in 1840 the official value of exports was £102,705,372, the real value only £51,406,430.—*Ibid.*

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

must always, in such circumstances, be a great balance of imports over exports; and consequently, after the expiry of a few years of prosperity, a severe drain upon the metallic treasures of the country, and its invariable results, a contracted currency, fall of prices, and general distress. The sequence is as necessary and unavoidable as the succession of night to day. The reason is, that the amount of imports is determined by the consumption of the *whole* people; that of exports, by the labour of a *small part* of them only. When the people are prosperous, therefore, the imports must greatly exceed the exports.

35. Bad seasons from 1836 to 1841.

The next circumstance which came to operate with decisive effect in increasing this balance of imports over exports, and swelling the drain upon the metallic treasures of the country, was the great and long-continued change which, in 1836, took place in the *seasons* in the British Islands. Abundant in every respect, the harvests from 1832 to 1835 had been pre-eminently so in wheaten crops. It was hard to say whether the genial warmth and showers of spring, or the bright sun and protracted dry weather of autumn, had been most favourable to the production of that noble cereal crop. But it was very different with the seasons from 1836 to 1841. The rains of the autumn of 1836, excessive in Scotland and the north of England, first wakened the people of Great Britain from their fancied dream of peace and plenty. They were, in these latitudes, greater than had been known since the cold and calamitous season of 1816; and by a singular chance, the harvest in the south of England was seriously injured by excessive drought, at the very time when that in the north was almost destroyed by incessant rains. The consequences were soon apparent. Prices rapidly rose during the succeeding winter; importation of wheat, which had almost entirely ceased, recommenced, and the average cost of a quarter, which in the preceding year had been 39s. 5d., rose to 48s. 6d.[1]

[1] Tooke on Prices, iii. 1-8; Personal knowledge.

The harvest of 1837, upon the whole, was not an unfavourable one, though the wetness in Scotland and the north of England, especially in spring, continued, and the crop in these grain districts was seriously injured, insomuch that the average prices of the succeeding year rose to 55s. 10d., and the importation steadily increased. But the next year (1838) was one, in an agricultural point of view, of almost unmitigated disaster. On the 6th January a violent snow-storm came on, followed by a tract of frost of two months' duration, and, for these Islands, uncommon severity. Even in the south of England the thermometer fell to 5° below zero of Fahrenheit: in Scotland it was at —10° and —12°.* Such extreme cold, if followed by corresponding warmth in summer, is by no means inconsistent, as the example of Upper Canada shows, with the raising of very fine cereal crops. But that is by no means the case in the British Islands: no burst of a Canadian spring succeeds the gloom of an arctic winter. On the contrary, the more severe and protracted the winter, the colder and more ungenial in general is the spring, the more late and wet the harvest. So it proved in 1838. The rains of the summer and autumn of that year were incessant, and not, as in the two preceding, confined to Scotland and the north of England, but universal over the British Islands. The consequences were disastrous in the extreme; but what is very remarkable, more so to the manufacturing than the agricultural interests. The latter were compensated for a deficient harvest by an enhanced price; but to the former it was a source of unmitigated calamity. The connection between an unfavourable harvest, great importation of grain, and consequent export of the precious metals, had become apparent to all, and most of all to the mercantile classes.[1] Men became sensitive and nervous as the rains continued with unmitigated severity

36. Calamitous harvests of 1838 and 1839.

[1] Tooke, iii. 7-9; Personal knowledge.

* The Author frequently saw it at —5° in February 1838, at Possil House, near Glasgow.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

through the whole of autumn; and the merchants, coming to the front of the Royal Exchange, and looking up to the watery sky, exclaimed, "The Bank will break! the Bank will break!"*

37. Bad crop of 1839.

In consequence of this incessant rain, prices of wheat rose to 78s. 4d. by the end of December, and reached 81s. 6d. in the first week of January 1839, being higher than it had been since 1816, and more than double what it had been three years before. Notwithstanding an immense and unprecedented importation, which, under the sliding-scale, was immediately thrown into the market at the lowest duty then paid, prices were sustained during the whole year; for the crop, on being thrashed out, proved worse than had been anticipated, and the worst that had been known since 1816. The deficiency, as compared with the preceding year, was fully a fourth, with 1835 a third. The quantity of wheat required for food and seed in Great Britain was about 15,000,000 quarters; so that nearly 4,000,000 quarters required to be imported to supply the wants of the country, and at the present high prices they could not be got for less than £9,000,000 or £10,000,000. The spring of 1839, as is always the case after a severe winter, was extremely cold and backward, and the summer and autumn again deluged with rains, which rendered the harvest of that year nearly as deficient as that of 1838 had been. Thus, although, owing to the great rise of prices in the preceding years, a much greater breadth of land had been sown with grain than formerly, there was still a deficiency of wheaten crops in the British Islands of at least 2,000,000 quarters, which required to be supplied by importation.[1] The average

[1] Tooke, iii. 3-13, 73, iv. 3-5.

* The Author saw, on the 31st December 1838, in the Carse of Falkirk, one of the finest agricultural districts of Scotland, men standing up to their knees in snow, mowing wheat with scythes, which they effected by shaving off the ears as they stood erect above the snow. It began to rain heavily in the beginning of August in that year, and with the exception of the period of frost, it rained almost incessantly for seven months in Scotland.

price of 1839 was 70s. 8d.; between the 5th August 1838 to the 3d August 1840, the quantity of wheat imported into Great Britain was 5,324,171 quarters;* and the cost of the grain imported in 1838 and 1839 was about £10,000,000, nearly the whole of which was paid in gold.

38. Crops of 1840 and 1841.

The crops of 1840 and 1841 were not so deficient as those of the two preceding years had been, but still they were far from being of average amount, and the prices in consequence continued high, and the importation large. The average price of 1840 was 63s. 6d., and of 1841 63s. 4d.; indicating an improvement from the two disastrous years 1838 and 1839, but still by no means an average supply, or satisfactory state of things. The winter 1840-41 was again very severe, and the subsequent spring backward, and incessant rain fell in the autumn of both years. The quantity of wheat imported between 1st August 1840 and 1st August 1841 was 1,925,241 quarters; between the same period in 1841 and 1842, 2,900,000 quarters. The inspected market returns from 1st September 1841 to 1st September 1842, showed only 3,626,000 quarters brought to market; whereas the corresponding year after 1st September 1842 showed 5,000,000 brought to market. Thus the nation was on short supply to the extent of a half in both years, and of that supply, such as it was, a large proportion *came from foreign parts!*[1] Notwithstanding the high prices, the quantity of wheat imported yearly from Ire-

[1] Tooke on Prices, iv. 7, 13, 35.

* Viz.—

	Quarters.
From 5th August 1838 to end of that year,	1,827,088
In 1839,	2,712,555
In 1840, to 5th August,	784,171
	5,324,171

—TOOKE *On Prices*, iv. 3.

The quantity of rain which fell in every part of Great Britain, in these two years, was fully double the usual amount. In the county of Lanark, the average quantity is 36 inches a-year; in 1838 it was 68 inches; in 1839, 66. The average in London and Edinburgh, and the east coast of the island generally, is 24 inches.

CHAP. XXXVII.

1839.

land in three years, owing chiefly to the excessive rain, did not average 200,000 quarters.*

39. Immense distress in the country during these years.

A most inadequate idea of the sufferings of the people, and consequent discontent, during the disastrous years from 1837 to 1841, will be formed, if the prices of grain, and especially wheat alone, are taken into consideration, compared with what they had been in preceding years since the peace of 1815. The immense difference in price of every article of produce, and in consequence in wages, produced by the Act of 1819 restoring cash payments, must be taken into consideration if a true view of the real suffering endured is to be taken. That Act having lowered prices and wages fully 50 per cent, the rise of wheat to 80s. a quarter was in reality as great a rise as one to 120s. would have been in the latter years of the war. Wheat had *doubled in price* during three years, while wages, so far from having kept pace with that advance, had, from the very same cause, *receded* nearly as much. Weavers, instead of 8d. a-day, were making only 4½d.; ordinary labourers, instead of 1s. 6d. a-day, only 1s. The shopkeepers and traders were in an equally wretched condition: their stock of goods was every day falling in value if it remained on their hands; their sales, if they made any, were daily at more reduced prices. Great as the suffering was among the agricultural labourers from the

* The quantities of wheat imported from Ireland into Great Britain, in the undermentioned years, were as follows, clearly showing how dependent the returns of cereal crops in that country are on dry seasons :—

				Quantity— Quarters.		Prices. s.	D.
From Aug. 1,	1834	to Aug. 1,	1835,	625,567	...	41	5
„	1835	„	1836,	705,593	...	42	8
„	1836	„	1837,	457,435	...	55	0
„	1837	„	1838,	590,842	...	57	10
„	1838	„	1839,	332,270	...	71	8
„	1839	„	1840,	174,650	...	68	0
„	1840	„	1841,	192,885	...	63	6
„	1841	„	1842,	216,204	...	63	4
„	1842	„	1843,	310,344	...	49	4
„	1843	„	1844,	467,800	...	53	9
„	1844	„	1845,	729,802	...	46	7

—TOOKE *On Prices*, iv. 35.

high prices, it was much greater among the manufacturing; for the price of their produce, instead of being raised, as that of the farmers was, by the long-continued scarcity, was every day diminished; and thus, while the price of the necessaries of life was nearly doubled, the wages by which they were to purchase them were nearly halved. This arose from the action of a large importation of grain, and other causes producing a great export of the precious metals, on the amount of the currency in circulation, and the consequent price of every species of produce unaffected by real scarcity, which was so strikingly illustrated in these fearful years.

40. Effect of these changes on the currency.

The circulation of the Bank of England in 1835 had been £18,500,000, its bullion £6,219,000, which rose in January 1836 to £7,076,000. The joint-stock bank circulation at the same period was £11,100,000, and in 1836 £17,707,000: in all, about £30,500,000; and with the Irish and Scotch banks about £38,000,000.[1] The first indications of a drain upon the Bank's coffers, and consequent monetary crisis, occurred in April 1836, when the joint-stock mania was at its height, and credit was high in this country; but the crusade of the President of the United States against the banks in that country, already described, had produced an extraordinary demand for specie on the other side of the Atlantic. So great, however, was the stock of specie, owing to the entire cessation of the importation of foreign grain at that period in the British Islands, that this difficulty was soon surmounted; and the copious shipments of gold to the United States at that period averted the catastrophe there for more than a year. But in the succeeding years it could no longer be averted. The President's circular of 12th July 1836, requiring all purchases of public lands and payments to the Treasury to be made in specie, coupled with the deficient harvest of 1837, and the still more deficient one of 1838 in these Islands, and the great balance of imports over exports in the trade of Great Britain, arising from

[1] Tooke, iii. 126.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

the prosperity of the two preceding years, then conspired to produce a drain upon the Bank's coffers which went on steadily increasing, till it brought that establishment, and with it the whole commercial world in Great Britain, to the very verge of insolvency. The stock of bullion in the Bank's coffers, which in the beginning of 1838 had been above £10,000,000, sunk in the middle of October 1839 to £2,522,000; while its deposits, which in the former period had been £11,266,000, were reduced in the latter to £5,952,000! The Bank escaped bankruptcy by a loan of £2,000,000 from twelve of the principal bankers of Paris, which was only granted after much hesitation, and inquiries in this country of a very humiliating description. This crisis was the more remarkable that there was no *internal* pressure at the time; on the contrary, the money paid in by the country bankers was greater than what was drawn out for domestic purposes. The *foreign* drain did the whole.[1] *

[1] Tooke, iii. 73, 91.

41. Contraction of the currency, rise of interest, and stoppage of credit.

The effect of this severe drain upon the metallic treasure of the Bank, of course, was to narrow the circulation of that establishment, which was reduced in the beginning of 1840 to £16,366,000, being not more than *two-thirds* of what it had been even after the terrible monetary crisis of December 1825. So completely had the sup-

* Averages of Three Months of Bank of England, from 1838 to 1840.

	Circulation.	Deposits.	Bullion.
1838.			
January 9,	£17,900,000	£10,992,000	£8,895,000
April 3,	18,987,000	11,262,000	10,126,000
July 24,	19,286,000	10,424,000	9,749,000
October 16,	19,359,000	9,327,000	9,437,000
1839.			
January 9,	18,201,000	10,315,000	9,336,000
April 2,	18,371,000	8,998,000	7,073,000
July 23,	18,049,000	7,955,000	3,785,000
October 13,	17,612,000	6,734,000	2,522,000
1840.			
January 7,	16,366,000	5,952,000	3,454,000

—Tooke *On Prices*, iii. 78.

pression of small notes, which took effect in 1829, cramped the operations of the Bank, and fettered it in the means which it formerly enjoyed of relieving the distresses of the country! Of course, the effect of this contraction of issue by the Bank was to produce a corresponding reduction in the issues of the country bankers, which fell in the year 1838 no less than £2,000,000; producing a reduction of the paper circulation of England of above £4,000,000, at the very time when nearly the whole coin in the country was drained away to America and the grain-growing states.* The effect of this, again, was a considerable rise in the rate of interest charged on discounts; and no small sensation was excited on the Stock Exchange, on 20th June 1839, by an announcement from the directors of the Bank of England, that the rate of interest charged on the discount of bills was raised to 5½ per cent, being the first time it had passed the hitherto impassable line of 5 per cent. The rate was on 1st August raised to 6 per cent from 3½ per cent, which it had been a year before; at which advanced rate it continued for above a year. The inconvenience arising from this great advance in the interest paid for money, considerable as it is, and seriously as it diminished the profits of trade, is but a small part of the evils consequent upon such defensive measures, intended to effect a contraction of the currency. A far more serious and widespread evil is to be found in the sudden stoppage of credit and withdrawal of accommodation *altogether*, to all but the first class of traders; a

* Average of Notes of Bank of England and Country Banks in Circulation.

Years.	Bank of England.	Country Banks.	Total.
1837	£18,887,000	£12,012,196	£30,899,196
1838	19,480,000	10,225,488	29,713,486
1839	15,317,000	12,259,467	27,576,471
1840	15,797,000	10,883,244	26,630,244
1841	16,397,490	10,251,450	26,640,900

—Tooke *On Prices*, iii. and iv. pp. 87, 480, 491.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

state of things which at once renders a great proportion of the middle, and many of the highest class, insolvent, brings numerous bankrupt stocks into the market, checks speculation, and induces a great fall in the price of all articles of commerce, ruinous to the trading, and in the highest degree distressing to the labouring class, the more especially when it is accompanied, as it was at this time in the British Islands, with a great increase, from scarcity, in the price of the necessaries of life.[1]

[1] Tooke, iii. 78, 89.

42. General terror in Great Britain and America at the export of gold from England.

It is a curious proof how much more rapidly the truth in regard to the effects of political changes is discerned by practical men engaged in the real business of life, than by philosophers absorbed in the weaving of theories, or statesmen intrusted with the direction of affairs, that at the time when the legislature was clinging with invincible tenacity to a paper circulation which was to expand or contract according as gold flowed into or out of the country, and economists had pledged their credit on the marvellous assertion that the resumption of cash payments would not alter prices *more than three per cent*, and even that trifling alteration would be over *in a few weeks*,* the merchants, both in Great Britain and America, had come to regard with the utmost alarm the drain of gold from the Bank of England, occasioned by every serious deficiency in the grain crops of the former country. "During the last few years," says Mr Tooke, "a striking change has taken place in the degree of attention given to the effect of the seasons on the price of provisions. It is not now the farmer or the corn-dealer only who watches with painful anxiety the

* "Unquestionably," said Mr Ricardo, "a most fearful and destructive depreciation had at one time taken place. But from that we had recovered, and he was happy to reflect that we had so far retraced our steps. We have nearly got home; and he hoped his right honourable friend (Sir R. Peel) would enable us to reach it in safety. He could venture to state that *in a very few weeks all alarm would be forgotten*; and at the end of the year we should all be surprised that any alarm at all had ever prevailed *at the prospect of a variation of three per cent in the value of the circulating medium.* His particular reason for supporting the measure under consideration was this, by withdrawing paper so as to restore the note to its bullion value, an alteration of only *three per cent*—all that is required will be done."—*Parl. Deb.*, 1819.

state of the weather, at the several critical periods in the growth of the different descriptions of produce, and from what he thus observes infers the probable range of prices and of his own fortune in the succeeding year; such anxious observation has been scarcely less common *in the counting-house and on the Stock Exchange* than on the farm and in the corn-market. Every passing cloud, indeed, may at those periods be said to have had some effect on the price of public securities, and of shares in railways and other joint-stock companies, in consequence of the apprehensions entertained of the unfavourable influence of high prices, and *of large importations of corn*, on the rate of interest, and on banking accommodation."[1] So generally were these apprehensions entertained on the same subject on the other side of the Atlantic, and so strong the feeling of the dependence of the entire commercial world over the globe on the money market of England, that the President of the United States, in a message to Congress, lamented that the money power of London had become irresistible, and that the merchants of America, despite the obvious advantage to the industry of their country which would arise from a failure of the crops in England, contemplated it with dismay, from a sense of the effect it would have on the operations of the Bank of England, and the state of credit over the world.*

[1] Tooke, iii. 1.

* "The banks in the centre, to which the currency flows, and where it is required in payment of merchandise, hold the power of controlling those in the regions whence it comes, while the latter possess no means of restraining them, so that the value of individual property, and the prosperity of trade, through the whole interior of the country, are made to depend on the good or bad management of the banking institutions in the cities on the seaboard. From this state of dependence we cannot escape. The same laws of trade which give to the banks in our principal towns power over the whole banking system of the United States, subject the former in their turn to the money power of Great Britain. This, it is not denied, was the cause of the suspension of the New York banks in 1837, and their present embarrassments have arisen from the same cause. London is the centre in which all the currents of trade unite; and it is rendered irresistible by the large debts contracted there by our merchants, our banks, and our States. The introduction of a new bank into the most distant of our villages, places the business of that village within the influence of the money power of England. The time is not long past when a deficiency of foreign crops was thought to afford a profitable market for the

CHAP. XXXVII.

1839.

43. Immense effects of this drain of gold on both sides of the Atlantic.

It is not surprising that the merchants, both of Great Britain and America, watched with trembling anxiety the rains of August and September 1839 in the British Islands; for their consequences, under a currency in the heart of commercial circulation dependent on the retention of gold, were immense on both sides of the Atlantic. By stopping suddenly the credit given to the American houses by the London banks, it at once spread bankruptcy throughout the United States, occasioned the suspension of the United States Bank and all the other banks of America in the October of that year, and diffused general ruin over the whole of the trading classes in the country. The effects in Great Britain were not less calamitous, and from its being an old State, with complicated commercial relations, and without the boundless resources of the back settlements, they were there of much longer continuance, and recovered from with more difficulty. The bankruptcies, which had been very frequent ever since the abolition of small notes, and consequent limitation of bank accommodation in 1829, became fearfully numerous in 1839 and 1840—nearly double of what they had been five years before.* They increased in weight as much as in number in those disastrous years; for the houses engaged in the American trade, and which had accepted the bills in 1838, which for a year averted the ruinous effects of General Jackson's crusade against the banks in the United States, were among the greatest and most wealthy that ever had existed in Great Britain.

surplus of our industry, but *now we wait with feverish anxiety the state of the English harvest*, not so much from motives of commendable sympathy, but *fearful lest its anticipated failure should narrow the field of credit there.*"—President VAN BUREN'S Message, Dec. 3, 1839; *Ann. Reg.* 1839, pp. 453, 455 (Public Documents).—What a picture of the effects, throughout the whole commercial world, of a currency in Great Britain dependent on the retention of gold, and so liable to be disturbed by every rain that falls!

* BANKRUPTCIES IN GREAT BRITAIN.

1834,	1101	1838,	978
1835,	1032	1839,	1293
1836,	929	1840,	1670
1837,	1668	1841,	1789

—*Ann. Reg.* (Public Documents for three years).

The effects of the failure of these great houses, and of the universal contraction of credit from banks, were to the last degree calamitous in this country, and produced that universal fall of prices and widespread distress among the labouring poor, which could not fail to end in public convulsions or an entire change in the system of policy of government.

44. Panic in Belgium and France.

The shock given to commercial credit over the world by the run upon the Bank of England in 1838 and 1839, was felt nearly as severely in Belgium and France as in the United States or the commercial towns of England. In September 1838 the Bank of Belgium failed, which spread consternation and distrust over the whole of the Low Countries; and at the same time the panic was so great in Paris that Lafitte's bank with difficulty weathered the storm. The bankruptcies in France in those years told the same melancholy tale of widespread and consuming distress which those of Great Britain and America had done. The effect of these disasters, of course, was to extend the distrust and stagnation in Great Britain, and augment the number of those thrown out of employment, as well as the profits or salaries of those still engaged in business.[1]

[1] Tooke, iii. 74, 75; Ann. Hist. xxi. 742-749.

45. Distress in Great Britain.

These effects soon appeared in every imaginable way in the British Islands. Everywhere was told the same unvarying tale of bankruptcy, suffering, and want of employment. It is true, the poor-law returns,* owing to the

* Expended on the Poor, and Persons relieved in England and Wales.

Years.	Amount.	In-door.	Out-door.	Total.
1836	£4,717,630	...	...	...
1837	4,644,741	...	...	...
1838	4,123,604	...	...	...
1839	4,421,712	...	...	...
1840	4,576,965	169,232	1,456,313	1,721,351
1841	4,760,929	192,106	1,361,061	1,626,201

—Porter's *Progress of the Nation*, 94, 3d edit.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

efforts made by the Poor-Law Commissioners to keep down charges, did not exhibit any great increase in these years; although the great apparent decrease of £2,000,000, so much boasted of at first, was almost entirely owing to the extremely low prices of food in the years 1835 and 1836. But the *number of paupers* increased in a frightful progression, insomuch that in the year 1840 they amounted to 1,721,000 out of a population at that period not exceeding 16,000,000,—showing that more than ONE IN NINE of the whole population had become a recipient of public charity. At the same time, the paupers in Ireland were 2,285,000, and in Scotland, 85,000, making a total of 4,081,000 in the British Islands, or fully a seventh part of the whole population, which at that time was about 27,000,000. The increase of crime in these years told a similar woeful tale of suffering in the labouring classes: the committals had swelled from 20,000 in England and Wales in 1833, to 31,000 in 1842.* It was no wonder that crime and pauperism were advancing with such rapid strides over the land, for the condition of the working classes had become miserable in the extreme. The wages of agricultural labour in Ireland were only 3½d. a-day; the weavers in England could earn no more; and the authentic record of what wages should be made up to in the rural districts of the south of England,[1]† proves that they had fallen so low as to be inadequate to the support of a human being on the very lowest species

[1] Doubleday's Life of Peel, i. 507; Ann. Reg. 1839, 507.

* COMMITTED IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Years.	Committals.	Years.	Committals.
1833, . . .	20,072	1838, . . .	23,094
1834, . . .	22,451	1839, . . .	24,443
1835, . . .	20,731	1840, . . .	27,187
1836, . . .	20,984	1841, . . .	27,760
1837, . . .	23,612	1842, . . .	31,309

—PORTER, 635, 3d edit.

† Scale of allowance to which farm-labourers' wages were to be made up by the magistrates of Dorset in 1830:—

When quartern loaf is at	12d.	11d.	10d.	9d.	8d.	7d.
Weekly wages, .	3s. 1d.	2s. 10d.	2s. 7d.	2s. 4d.	2s. 1d.	1s. 10d.

—DOUBLEDAY'S *Life of Peel*, ii. 50.

of food. In fact, they were scarcely more than was at the same time earned by the Ryots of Hindostan.

It was the *incessant fall* in the price of commodities of every sort which had now gone on, with only two periods of intermission of two years each, for twenty years, which was the cause of this universal and unheard-of distress. With the exception of the years 1824 and 1825, when the Small-Note Bill temporarily suspended the decline, and the years 1834 and 1835, when the Joint-Stock Banks Bill, and bill making Bank of England notes a legal tender save at the Bank of England, produced the same effect, the whole period from 1819 to 1839 had been one of incessant fall of prices. The chief articles of commerce had declined in money value during that time 50 per cent, many much more.* Such a long-continued and prodigious fall of prices filled all classes with despair. True, they

46. Decline of prices was the cause of this suffering.

* The following most valuable Table of Prices was prepared with great care by Mr Taylor, and presented by him to the Commons Committee on Commercial Distress in 1848, and is to be found in their Report. The price of each article at the commencement is taken as the standard:—

Articles of Commerce.	Price.	1782 to 1790.	1805 to 1811.	1812 to 1818.	1819 to 1825.	1826 to 1832.	1835 to 1837.
	£ s. d.						
Wheat, per qr.,	2 5 0	100	189	193	130	130	103
Barley, per qr.,	1 4 6	100	177	191	134	186	121
Oats, per qr.,	0 17 2	100	170	181	131	135	122
Beef, per tierce,	3 13 10	100	195	188	156	142	152
Pork, per barrel,	2 19 7	100	168	176	133	121	111
Cotton, per lb.,	0 1 2	100	119	105	57	37	49
Cotton yarn, p.lb.,	0 2 8	100	179	150	117	73	63
Indigo, per lb.,	0 0 11	100	110	106	97	88	55
Iron, per ton,	5 18 0	100	151	151	148	115	96
Coal, per chal.,	0 19 11	100	202	190	156	139	124
Coffee, per cwt.,	4 9 5	100	123	88	124	59	88
Malt, per bushel,	0 3 0¾	100	186	225	176	177	150
Flour, per sack,	1 17 3	100	214	223	155	162	137
Silk, per lb.,	1 6 3	100	106	111	90	80	76
Tea, p. lb., Congou,	0 1 9	100	73	75	73	67	61
Tobacco, per lb.,	0 0 5½	100	204	352	161	104	109
Sugar, per cwt.,	1 9 8	100	139	181	107	93	104
Rum, per gallon,	0 3 1	100	179	185	106	103	100
Wine, per pipe,	22 7 4	100	228	274	228	221	231
Wool, per lb.,	0 0 10½	100	238	221	150	92	166
Spirits, per gal.,	1 8 0	100	233	230	193	112	82

—*Commons' Report*, 1848.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

bought everything cheaper, but what did this cheapness avail them when the wages of labour came down in a still greater proportion, when two millions of destitute paupers in Ireland were at every moment ready to inundate the labour market of England, and employment even on the lowest rates was often not to be had, from the discouragement to speculation of every kind which the continual fall of prices occasioned? The only thing which rendered this fall tolerable to the working classes in towns and the manufacturing districts, was the extremely low price of the necessaries of life which the magnificent harvests from 1832 to 1836 occasioned; but this reduced the agricultural classes to despair; and the table of the House of Commons groaned, during these years, under petitions which set forth with truth, that under existing prices cultivation of any kind could be carried on only at a loss.* And when the bad seasons began in 1837, and five cold and wet autumns in succession raised the cost of food, even of the humblest kind, again to the war rates, which were then felt as famine prices, a still more general and acute suffering was experienced by the manufacturers; for in proportion to the decline of their wages, from the contraction of the currency and consequent commercial distress, was the rise in the cost of the necessaries of life from the badness of the season.

This unparalleled series of internal disasters produced a very important and lasting effect upon the administra-

* COMPARATIVE FALL OF FOOD AND OF WAGES OF WEAVERS AND COMBERS, AND PRISONERS IN WAKEFIELD PRISON, IN THE UNDERMENTIONED YEARS.

	1800.	1810.	1820.	1830.	1840.	1842.
Price of Wheat per qr. .	£5 13 7	£5 6 2	£3 7 11	£3 4 3	£3 6 4	£2 5 0
Weavers, per week, .	0 15 0	0 16 0	0 16 0	0 16 0	0 8 0	0 6 0
Combers' wages,	1 1 0	0 19 0	0 19 0	1 0 0	0 9 0	0 6 0
No. of Prisoners in Wakefield Prison, .	670	499	2169	2620	3565	4430

—*Ann. Reg.* 1842; DOUBLEDAY'S *Life of Peel*, ii. p. 368.

tion of the new Poor-Law Act, and, through the suffering with which it was attended, ultimately upon the party in Great Britain intrusted with power. That this Act corrected many abuses which, in the course of ages, had crept into the administration of the English poor-laws, was certain; and a reduction of two millions, which took place in the two years immediately succeeding the passing of the Act, inspired general hopes that a remedy had at last been discovered for the growing evils of pauperism.*

47. Effect of these disasters on the new Poor-Law Act.

But, though not apparent on the face of the Act, or openly avowed by its supporters, there is no doubt that the intention of its authors was to go a great deal farther, and to put an end altogether to parochial relief, unless in such cases of extreme destitution or incapacity for labour as induced the applicants for relief to go into the workhouse rather than forego it. The "*workhouse test*" was the great discovery of the economists which was to distinguish real distress from that which was assumed, and bring down the burden of poor-rates at length to the lowest point consistent with the prevention of actual death by famine. This purpose, carefully concealed from the public, was not disguised in the private instructions of the commissioners to the boards of guardians.† With this view the regulation was made, that husband was to be separated from wife, parent from child; that the inmates of all workhouses should wear workhouse dresses; and the fare was to be regulated in such a manner as to be the most economical which was consistent with the support of

* Lord Brougham, with more candour than discretion, avowed this secret feeling in the House of Lords in the debate on the bill; for he said, "If something is not done to stop relief being given, your lordships' estates will be swallowed up, and I myself, Lord Brougham, will become a Westmoreland pauper."—DOUBLEDAY'S *Life of Peel*, ii. 239.

† "We could not be understood as recommending the *immediate* abolition of the English poor-laws; we are simply desirous of stating the conclusions to which we have been led by the preceding evidence, that *all* poor-laws are in their essence impolitic and uncalled for, and that consequently their *final abolition* ought to be the *ultimate object of any changes that may be made;* an object, however, that cannot be attained without being preceded by several years' *careful preparation for it.* E. CARLTON TUFFNELL, P. F. JOHNSTON, Commissioners."—*Poor-Law Commissioners' Reports*, App. A., Part ii.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

life. Relief was to be sternly denied to all persons who declined to enter these gloomy abodes; and to render them capable of containing the multitudes who might be expected to apply for admission, huge union workhouses were erected in most places, called by the people "bastiles," the very sight of which, it was trusted, would deter any one from seeking admission.[1]

[1] Doubleday, ii. 186.

48. Dissatisfaction at the Act, and its entire abrogation by the distress of 1839.

Although the Poor-Law Commissioners appointed by Government were so deeply imbued with the principles of the economists that a steady prosecution of the ulterior objects of the bill might be anticipated from them, yet happily the immediate and local administration was intrusted to a different set of men, entitled "Guardians of the Poor," elected by the rate-payers, and still, for the most part, subject to the old influences. Hence there was a constant struggle going forward in every part of England between the Central Board and the local commissioners, and according as the former or the latter prevailed, the new act was administered with more or less rigour, and dissatisfaction and complaint were more or less general. During the cheap years, and under the influence of the plentiful harvests of 1834 and 1835, these complaints were not very general; for the prosperity without diminished the number of applicants for relief, and the cheapness of food rendered the guardians less niggardly in its distribution. But when the bad harvests of 1838 and 1839 came on, and starving crowds were at the gates of the workhouses clamouring for admission, while wheat, whereon they were to be fed, was at 80s., it became utterly impossible to carry out the instructions of the commissioners. At Nottingham the crowd of applicants was so great that no building could hold a fifth part of them, and outdoor relief or a serious riot was the only alternative. In Lancashire similar scenes occurred; and in all the manufacturing counties the pressure was so immense, that a general relaxation of the practice in regard to outdoor

relief took place. In the succeeding year this relaxation became universal, insomuch that out of 1,721,351 paupers relieved, no less than 1,456,313 were outdoor ones; and the proportion has remained very nearly the same, though the numbers have been very much reduced in subsequent years. A striking proof how vain are instructions of government commissioners when opposed to the stream of general feeling, and of the manner in which, in a free community, dangerous laws introduced by inexperienced men are quietly abrogated by the good sense of those intrusted with their administration.[1]

[1] Porter, 94, 3d edit.; Doubleday, ii. 233, 234. Ann. Reg. 1837, 130; 1839, 297-299.

49. Debate on the subject in the House of Commons.

The administration of the poor-laws was a subject too seriously affecting the great body of English labourers, not to rouse the anxious attention both of Parliament and the public press. Accordingly, so soon as the general distress began in 1837, the matter was brought before Parliament by Mr Walter, in a very powerful speech, which acquired additional currency from the advocacy of the *Times*, of which journal he was a leading proprietor, and the support of Mr Fielden, who seconded the motion, and brought to the aid of the cause unflinching courage, warm philanthropy, and unwearied industry. In the course of the debate, it appeared that the new act had been adopted in 12,132 out of 13,433 parishes or townships of which England consisted, and that, especially in several of the southern parts of the island, a great reduction of rates had taken place; the rates in 4082 parishes, including 2,722,349 souls, having decreased from £2,189,000 to £1,187,000. On the other hand, it was proved, and indeed not denied, that very great oppression in individual cases had been committed, chiefly in refusing outdoor relief, and the wholesale removal of the poor from the parish, when their application had been made to that on which they were legally chargeable. In one instance, 217 of these unfortunate persons were seen packed in a single waggon! Ministers made the utmost opposition to any inquiry;

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

but the public feeling was so strong, owing to the growing experience of evil with the advent of calamitous times, that they were compelled to yield, and a committee was appointed to inquire into the working of the Poor-Law Amendment Act in every part of England, which shortly commenced its herculean labours. The Report of the Commissioners was lodged before the end of the year, and bore in substance that the operation of the new poor-law had been on the whole satisfactory, though many cases of individual or local hardship had occurred. The point was very anxiously debated at the time; but the subject has now lost much of its importance, in consequence of the compulsory practical repeal of the most obnoxious parts of the Act which took place during the severe distress of 1838 and 1839, and the consequent restoration of the system of outdoor relief, which it had been the great object of the Act to abolish. Since that time the paupers in England have been generally from 800,000 to 900,000, of whom five-sixths were supported by outdoor relief.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1837, 128, 142; Parl. Deb. xxxvi. 898, 1280.

50. Trades-Unions and Strikes; Chartism and Ribbonism.

It would have been well for the country if all the other social evils which arose out of the long-continued distress which pervaded the working classes from 1837 to 1842, had been as susceptible of practical abolition as those connected with the working of the new Poor-Law Act. But this was very far indeed from being the case; and out of the sufferings of that calamitous period arose three sets of evils, as widespread in their operation as they were ruinous in their effects, and under some of which the empire has ever since that period, with few intermissions, continually laboured. These were Trades-Unions, Strikes, and Chartism in Great Britain, and Ribbonism in Ireland; maladies to the last degree in themselves calamitous, but still more serious as indicating a diseased and suffering state of the social body in which they arise.

Combinations are the natural resource of the weak against the strong, of the poor against the rich, the

oppressed against the oppressors. As such they have been known in all countries and in all ages, and have often rendered important, sometimes beneficial, services to society. Their natural tendency, however, and in fact the condition of their existence, is the bringing the great body of the combined persons under the guidance, which soon becomes the imperious disposition, of a few ambitious leaders, who are generally as eminent from their talent as they are unscrupulous in their measures. Combinations among workmen, to prevent a reduction or effect a rise of their wages, had been known from a very early period in Great Britain, and many penal laws had been passed both in England and Scotland for their suppression; but it was not till the Act of 1819 had induced a general fall of prices, and consequently of wages, that they assumed a general and alarming character. In 1822 and 1823, however, in consequence of the rapid fall of wages, they became general in both parts of the island, and were organised in an occult and skilful manner on the model of the "secret societies," then so prevalent in France and Italy; and by the instigation of their leaders a great number of frightful crimes were committed, chiefly against workmen who ventured to work at lower wages than the chiefs of the combination had fixed on,—such as assassination, fire-raising, throwing vitriol on the face, or the like, which filled society with consternation, and of which the better classes of the workmen themselves came, in their better moments, to be ashamed.*

51. Origin of trades-unions.

It was at first hoped that the repeal of the Combination Laws, by legalising strikes to raise or prevent the fall of wages, would put an end to these atrocious crimes at which humanity shudders; and there is reason to hope, from the experience of the last which have occurred in Great Britain, that these expectations will be realised.

52. Increase of strikes from 1834 to 1837.

* Between 1822 and 1825, great numbers of combination crimes, such as murder, fire-raising, throwing vitriol in the face or eyes, and the like, formed the subject of trial, and in many cases of conviction, in Glasgow.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

But in 1837 and 1838 this was very far from being the case. On the contrary, strikes at that period, without having lost anything of their violent and criminal character, had become more formidable, from the increased number engaged in them, and the acknowledged legality of their association. Conviction for crimes perpetrated for the purposes of the strike was always difficult, often impossible, even when numbers were witnesses of the crime, because they were perpetrated with the utmost precautions against discovery; and being in general directed against fellow-workmen, the intimidation with which they were accompanied was such, that even the sufferers under the violence could seldom be prevailed on to come forward as witnesses; and if they did, they endeavoured to escape future danger by declaring they could not identify the guilty parties. Add to this, that from the total want of police at that period in any place but the large towns, it was alike impossible in rural districts to give protection to the new hands, or obtain evidence against the perpetrators of violence when committed on their defenceless victims. Thus nine-tenths of combination crimes were committed with impunity: and such was the terror generally inspired by the extent of the associations, the number of the crimes they perpetrated, and the secresy with which they were committed, that prosecutions were rarely attempted; and if begun, still more rarely successful: and even the public press, from motives of terror, ceased, except in very flagrant cases, to record their excesses.[1]

[1] Personal knowledge.

53. Great cotton-spinners' strike in 1837, and its break-up.

At length matters were brought to a crisis by the conduct of the Cotton-Spinners' Association in the west of Scotland in 1837. A very serious strike had taken place of the calico-printers in that part of the country in 1834, attended with the usual amount of violence and intimidation; but though some persons had been brought to trial for these offences, it was found impossible to convict them of more than the minor offences, and they escaped with

imprisonment only. Encouraged by this practical impunity, the great Cotton-Spinners' Association in Glasgow struck, to prevent a reduction of wages, in consequence of the commercial embarrassments arising from the crash in the United States in April 1837. Such was the extent of this association, which had its ramifications all over Scotland and the north of England, that during the last sixteen years £200,000 had passed through its hands. When it struck in spring 1837, the whole works of that description in Scotland were stopped, and above fifty thousand persons, including the families of the workers, were deprived of the means of subsistence. As the masters stood out firmly, the strike continued long, and at length the workmen and their families were reduced to the last degree of destitution and suffering. In this stage of the disease the usual aggravated symptoms appeared. Intimidation became general; menacing crowds paraded through the streets, and thronged round the gates of the manufactories where the new hands required to enter; and at length, after numerous acts of violence, and throwing fire-balls into several of the manufactories, which were happily extinguished before they ignited the buildings, a working man, one of the new hands, was shot in the back, and killed by one of the assassins in the employment of the association, in open day, in one of the public streets of Glasgow. Informed of this outrage, and having obtained information as to the numbers and place of meeting of the committee, the sheriff of Lanarkshire proceeded with a body of twenty policemen, two nights after, and arrested the whole, sixteen in number, in a garret to which access was obtained by a trap-ladder in Gallowgate of that city. This was on a Saturday night, August 3. On the Monday following the strike was at an end, and all the mills in Glasgow were going: so entirely are these calamitous associations the result of terror inspired in the enslaved multitude by a few daring and unscrupulous leaders.[1]

Aug. 3.

[1] 'Cotton Spinners' Trial, 1838, by Swinton, 13-20.

Five of the persons apprehended were afterwards in-

CHAP. XXXVII.

1838.

54. Indictment of the Committee for conspiracy and murder. Jan. 17, 1838.

dicted for illegal conspiracy and murder, and the evidence brought out at the trial unfolded in the clearest manner the thorough organisation, deep designs, and extreme danger of these trades-unions. It appeared, from the testimony of some of their own number, that when a strike had lasted a considerable time without producing the desired result of forcing the employers into submission, the workmen of the different factories engaged in it were summoned by the committee of the association to send delegates to a place of meeting to appoint a "*secret select committee.*" Two were summoned from each factory, and at Glasgow at that period there were thirty-seven such establishments. The meaning and purpose of such a committee was perfectly understood by the whole association. It was to organise intimidation and violence, and, if necessary, assault, fire-raising, and murder. When the delegates assembled in the appointed place, each was directed to write on a slip of paper the persons whom he voted for to form the "secret select," which consisted in general of five persons, and give it folded up to the secretary. Having got the votes, the secretary immediately dissolved the meeting without announcing who had the majority, and thus the names were known only to himself. In the evening he called on the persons who had the majority of votes, and informed them in private that they had been elected. When the "secret select" was thus appointed, it commenced its operations, but with the utmost precautions against detection. Its meetings were held sometimes in one place, sometimes in another, but always in secresy, and none of its proceedings were committed to writing. When it was deemed expedient, for the purposes of the association, that an assault or a murder should be committed, an anonymous letter was sent to the person selected out of No. 61, the name appropriated to the loose daring characters who were ready to undertake any service, however desperate, for the sake of gain. He

came accordingly to the appointed place, and was ushered into a dark room. He was there told by one of the members what he was to do, or who was to be assaulted or murdered, or in whose eyes vitriol was to be thrown, and when and where the crime was to be perpetrated. Upon his agreeing to undertake it, he was desired to put out his hands and *take* whatever he could reach, which was a sum of money. Thus all concerned could safely swear that nothing was *given* on the occasion. The committee charged itself with procuring the assassin the means of immediate emigration, which promise was in general faithfully performed. This done, he departed, and at the appointed time lay in wait for his victim. Thus was the crime planned, and the execution of it chosen—no one knew how, or by whom; and without the committee or their agent ever once seeing each other, the most effectual means were taken to secure the perpetration of the crime. The names of the secret select committee were known only to each other and the secretary of the association, with whom, from the consciousness of iniquity, they were deemed safe; and the mandates of this mysterious junto were obeyed by tens of thousands with an unanimity, and their measures looked forward to with an anxiety, unknown to the subjects of the most despotic sultan in the East.[1] *

[1] Cotton Spinners' Trial, 54, 78, 88; Combinations Committee Report, July 1838, 128, 164.

* "Every morning we asked each other why nothing was done last night. What did you mean by nothing being done?—*Why was no one murdered by the committee.*"—Murdoch's Evidence (a cotton-spinner); SWINTON'S *Report of Cotton-Spinners' Trial*, p. 80.

"I remember the shooting of John Graham. I was a member of the select committee. Kean was the person who fired the shot. He was convicted, whipped, and banished. Orr made a claim on the committee, on the ground that he had been hired for £20, with Kean and Lafferty, to shoot Graham. He produced a witness who proved the hiring, *and the Committee awarded the sum.*"—Murdoch's Evidence, *ibid.*, p. 67.

"June 15, 1837.—Moved at the general meeting by William Johnston, and *unanimously* carried, that the name of every *nob* (new hand) at present working, and the district he last worked in, should be enrolled in a book, and at the end of the strike, unless a change takes place, may be printed; but, at all events, the names of all who remained nobs at the end of the strike shall be printed and sent to all the spinning districts in Scotland, England, and Ireland; *and that they remain nobs for ever, and a persecuting committee be appointed*

CHAP. XXXVII.

1838.

56. The trial, and its results.

The steps adopted by the association when these committee-men were brought to trial were singularly illustrative of the immense extent of the combination, and the resolution of its members to attain their unlawful ends by the most flagrant attempts to obstruct the course of justice. First, a printed placard was widely posted in every manufacturing town of Great Britain and Ireland, on the same day, denouncing the conduct of the sheriff of Lanarkshire in apprehending the committee as tyrannical in the highest degree, and calling on all the combined trades to co-operate in defeating the measure. Next, that magistrate was assailed with anonymous letters three or four times a-week; from the time of the apprehension till the trial came on, five months after, from all parts of Great Britain and Ireland, threatening him with instant death if the accused persons were not imme-

to persecute them to the uttermost."—Minutes of Cotton-Spinners' Association; SWINTON'S *Report of the Trial.*

The oath taken by the cotton-spinners who were fully initiated was in these terms: "I, A. B., do voluntarily swear, in the awful presence of Almighty God, and before these witnesses, that I will execute with zeal and alacrity, as far as in me lies, every task and injunction which the majority of my brethren shall impose upon me in furtherance of our common welfare—*as the chastisement of nobs, the assassination of oppressors or tyrannical masters, or the demolition of shops that shall be deemed incorrigible;* and also, that I will cheerfully contribute to the support of such of my brethren as shall lose their work in consequence of their exertions against tyranny, or renounce it in resistance to a reduction of wages; and I do farther swear that I will never divulge the above obligation, unless I shall have been duly authorised and appointed to administer the same to persons becoming members of our fraternity."—*Evidence Combinations Committee*, June 6, 1825.

In regard to the trial, Sir Edward Sugden, now Lord St Leonards, said, on February 13, 1838: "No case had ever been investigated with more attention; no advantage had been taken against the prisoners in any particular; while the atrocity of the proceedings was greater than that of which any single man could be guilty. A more atrocious case he could not conceive, and it showed more clearly that there was no crime to which combination rising into conspiracy would not lead."—*Parl. Deb.*, February 13, 1838.

The system of hiring assassins to work out the purposes of a strike is not peculiar to Glasgow;—it is well known also in Manchester and Dublin. "Money," says Sir Charles Shaw, "is often voted in Manchester to convey members who have committed legal offences out of the country, in obedience to the commands of the ruling committee. The following are some of the entries: 'That £13, 4s. be allowed to ——— for passage-money to America after having murdered ———;' 'That £10 be given to ——— for outfit and passage-money to America after the murder of ———.'"— SIR CHARLES SHAW'S *Replies to* LORD ASHLEY'S *Queries*, 1834, p. 17.

diately liberated. The Crown witnesses, eleven in number, were so threatened that on their own petition they were committed to jail till the trial, and then sent out of the country at the public expense. At the trial, which lasted six days, the utmost efforts to disturb the course of justice were made. Five-and-twenty jurors were challenged by the prisoners, not one by the Crown. A crowd of two or three thousand unionists surrounded the court every evening when the trial was adjourned, which at length increased to such a degree that five thousand persons were assembled, and military assistance had to be sent for. Under these circumstances it was hardly to be expected that a verdict according to evidence could be obtained. The jury found the prisoners guilty of conspiracy, and they were sentenced to transportation,—but the murder not proven: a result which excited general dissatisfaction, as the evidence was thought to have warranted a general verdict of guilty. This was, two years after, followed by their being all liberated from confinement by Lord Normanby, then Home Secretary, in pursuance of his wholesale system of pardoning criminals, set on foot in Ireland.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. Feb. 13, 1838; Swinton's Trial, 372; Personal knowledge.

56. Beneficial results of this trial.

It was now evident, however, that this result was on the whole of a beneficial kind, and that the moral impression produced by the proceeding was enhanced by its having not been followed by the consequences which were generally anticipated. The *system* was slaughtered by the evidence adduced at the trial, and that is sometimes much better than executing the criminals on the scaffold. Men saw that the trades-unionists used daggers, though they suffered none. The moral effect produced by this memorable trial was immense—greater, perhaps, than that of any other within the memory of man; and it was only increased by the generally felt inadequacy of the punishment. There were no moving scenes on the scaffold to lessen the abhorrence at proud turpitude. It led immediately to a committee on the Combination Laws in Par-

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

liament, which took a great deal of important evidence on the subject, and ended by recommending nothing; the usual result when a great social evil not immediately affecting the interests of any party is under consideration. But the effect of the disclosures made at the trial, in rousing public indignation against the organised atrocities of these trades-unions, has been great and lasting. Strikes, indeed, have continued, and been attended by open violence and intimidation, but no secret system of organised assassination has been again attempted. There have been no more "secret select" committees; on the contrary, though the leaders of strikes often forget to obey their own precepts, they always now *set out* with deprecating any violation of the law. In the cotton-spinners' trade, this strike led to the general adoption of the self-acting mules, which, by superseding almost entirely the need of the male operative, has ended these strikes in that particular branch of manufacture altogether.

57. Vast importance of the subject, and its general neglect.

They have continued, however, in other trades, particularly those of colliers and iron-miners; and there is no subject that, from its magnitude and distressing consequences, more loudly calls for the intervention of Government. Worse even than plague, pestilence, or famine, combinations among workmen are the greatest social evil which, in a manufacturing or mining community, afflicts society. These, bad as they often are, affect only the bodies of men; but strikes affect their minds. They utterly confound the ideas of right and wrong among immense numbers of the people, by arraying them in hostile bands against their fellow-men, induce a "bellum plusquam civile" in the heart of peaceful society, and in their later stages lead them anxiously to expect the perpetration of the most atrocious crimes for the attainment of what they consider their legitimate rights. They subject tens, sometimes hundreds of thousands of persons, innocent of any offence, and anxious only to earn a subsistence by honest industry for themselves and their families, to months of compulsory idleness and real destitution. They

deprive them, often for long periods, of occupation, as fatal to their minds as the loss of wages is to their bodies. They band them together in the beginning by the strong attraction of common hope, in the end by the hellish bond of committed wickedness. They subject the immense majority of quiet inoffensive persons to the tyrannical rule of a small minority of violent and ambitious men, who form a secret power, wielding an authority greater than even the triumvirate of Augustus, or the Committee of Public Salvation of Robespierre. Their evils do not terminate with the closing of the strife, and the resumption of labour by the combined workmen; they leave a long catalogue of ills behind them, and for years after the energies of the workmen are depressed by the debt which they cannot discharge, idle habits which they cannot conquer, and crimes into which they have been involuntarily led.*

* The following Table, compiled by the sheriff of Lanarkshire from official sources, was laid before the Commons' Combination Committee in 1838, and exhibits a melancholy picture of the disastrous consequences of the mutations of the currency, and consequent combination and strikes in Glasgow, the great manufacturing emporium of the west of Scotland, for sixteen years before 1838:—

Years.	Population.	Serious Crimes tried by Jury.	Fever Patients in Royal Infirmary.	Deaths in whole City.	Rate of Mortality.	Rate of Crime to Population.
1822	151,440	98	229	3,690	1 to 41.00	1 to 1540
1823	156,170	114	269	4,647	1 ... 33.75	1 ... 1366
1824	161,190	118	523	4,670	1 ... 34.50	1 ... 1361
1825	166,280	160	897	4,898	1 ... 33.94	1 ... 1037
1826	171,600	188	926	4,538	1 ... 37.82	1 ... 909
1827	177,280	170	1084	5,136	1 ... 34.51	1 ... 1041
1828	183,150	212	1511	5,942	1 ... 30.82	1 ... 873
1829	189,270	239	865	5,452	1 ... 34.71	1 ... 790
1830	195,650	271	729	5,785	1 ... 37.73	1 ... 719
1831	202,450	238	1657	6,547	1 ... 30.91	1 ... 848
1832	209,230	272	1589	10,278†	1 ... 20.35	1 ... 768
1833	216,450	341	1288	6,632	1 ... 32.63	1 ... 633
1834	223,940	267	2003	6,728	1 ... 33.28	1 ... 823
1835	231,800	348	1359	7,849	1 ... 29.53	1 ... 633
1836	244,000	329	3125	9,143	1 ... 26.87	1 ... 741
1837	253,000	392	3860	10,888	1 ... 24.20	1 ... 645
1838	261,000	466	4071	11,421	1 ... 25.01	1 ... 590

—*Commons' Combinations Report*, 1838, p. 578.

† Cholera.

CHAP. XXXVII.

1838.

58. Causes of the little attention paid to them in society.

Great as these evils are, and universally as they are felt in all the manufacturing and mining districts, after the occurrence of every monetary crisis, and consequent depression of wages, there are no causes of ruin in society which excite so little permanent interest, or are so unlikely to be removed, either by the enactments of the legislature, or the unaided efforts of private individuals. The reason is, that the evils do not affect the *peculiar* interests of any influential body in the State, and that their removal *requires money*, from which all shrink. Government, in general, gives itself very little concern with such social contests, because they are not directed against itself, and do not, immediately at least, threaten the exchequer. They content themselves, therefore, with styling them "local disorders," the cognisance of which properly belongs to the magistrates on the spot, who are in general totally unprovided with any civil force adequate to arrest the evil. No religious party gives itself any concern about them, because they do not involve any difference of creed, and spring only from divisions in regard to temporal interests. The landed proprietors carefully eschew any discussion on the subject, for they have an instinctive conviction that it will terminate in the pronouncing that odious word "assessment." The working classes cling to them as their palladium, their *Magna Charta*, and regard them as the only means within their power of making wages rise in proportion to the profits of trade and the requirements of their families. Even the masters employing the combined workmen are far from being always averse to strikes; on the contrary, they sometimes secretly encourage, generally largely profit by them. The cessation of production in any branch of trade, of course makes the value of the stock on hand more valuable, and it is often no small comfort to them, when a monetary crisis has occurred, and prices are generally falling, to see the value of their own article continually rising, while at the same time they are relieved from

the disagreeable necessity, during a period of disaster, of paying their workmen wages.* Thus all classes, from different motives, concur either in secretly encouraging or regarding with supreme indifference these disastrous combinations; and the moment one of them is over, all concerned hasten to banish them from their thoughts, until, like the cholera, the disease returns, after a stated period, to renew its devastations in a society totally unprepared to combat them.

59. Reason why strikes are of so frequent occurrence.

What tends greatly to increase this strange indifference to the greatest social evil which afflicts society, is the opinion generally entertained that strikes are *always* unfortunate to the workmen, and therefore that their good sense or experience will lead to their discontinuance. There never was a greater mistake. In the great majority of instances strikes are *successful;* and it is the knowledge of this fact which renders them of such frequent recurrence. It is true, the world in general hears nothing except of those which are unfortunate, because it is for the interest of no one to publish those which are successful, and being soon over, they are as soon forgotten. But they are not forgotten by the workmen, who are encouraged by their frequent successes to try their strength with their masters, in circumstances entirely different, when they are sure to be defeated. The reason is, that they are successful when it is for the interest of the master to retain the men in his service, and unsuccessful when it is for his interest to get quit of them. With a rising market for the produce of their labour, no master will allow his workmen to remain idle as long as any profit remains to himself from their labour. With a falling one, he is too happy of a pretext to get quit of paying them their wages, for the produce of which existing

* During the great colliers' and iron-miners' strike in 1856, in Scotland, one coalmaster cleared £20,000 by a mass of dross, which, before it began, was absolutely unsaleable, and another £25,000. And the price of coals, which during its continuance was 25s. a-ton, was only 12s. 6d. at its commencement.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

prices will not yield a profit. Thus strikes are constantly successful when they take place with a rising market, and as uniformly unsuccessful when they are ventured upon with a falling; and it is because the workmen cannot be brought to see the difference of these situations that they occur so often, and, under circumstances evidently hopeless, are adhered to with such pertinacity. For the same reason, they may be expected to occur most frequently in a community in which, from the alternate expansions and contractions of the currency, prices frequently, and for a long period together, rise and fall, and are in truth the sad bequest of that system of monetary policy to the labouring classes of the community.

60. Institution of the Darg.

There is a very curious regulation general in all combinations among colliers and iron-miners, singularly characteristic of the levelling tendency of democratic institutions where they are fully developed. This is the *Darg*, as it is technically called, or quantity of minerals which, *and no more*, each working man is allowed to put out. It is fixed at a very moderate amount—equal only to what *indifferent* workmen can accomplish in eight or ten hours' labour. The strongest and most active are not permitted to do more, and hence the best workmen are forcibly retained at the level of the inferior ones. Capable of earning 7s. 6d. a-day, they are constrained by the majority to limit themselves to 4s. or 5s., as the general rate of wages may be. If a regulation of this tyrannical nature were to be proposed by the masters, they would make the empire ring with it from side to side: but being established by themselves, it is submitted to without an open, though many a secret murmur; and as the majority of all bodies of men are indolent or inefficient, it is generally established and quietly acquiesced in. It is an instance of the tyranny of the *democracy of unskilled over the aristocracy of skilled labour;* and is the result of the same feeling which causes intellectual superiority, when not entirely subservient to the popular will, to be so

generally the object of jealousy in democratic communities.

There is one way, and *one only*, of preventing the terrible evils of these combinations, and that is, to be prepared for them. The whole reliance of their leaders is on intimidation and violence, which, always disavowed in the outset, is always practised in the end. Make no attempt to coerce or prevent such strikes by legal measures. Allow them full liberty of action so far as they themselves are concerned, but secure to others, who are not inclined to go into their measures, the same rights which they assert for their own body. Nothing can effect this but a strong and *previously established* civil force. No great or expensive establishment is required for this purpose; but one is absolutely required of a certain magnitude, and constantly ready for action. Military, admirable as *a reserve*, are not alone sufficient; it is a powerful *civil* force, capable of being directed at will by Government to the menaced district, which is required. Fifteen hundred or two thousand men, regularly drilled, and ready to be called out like firemen when the occasion requires, would be ample for this purpose; for, suddenly directed to the endangered district, they would, if supported by one or two regiments, amply suffice to prevent intimidation, and thereby cut short the strike which relies on such methods of gaining its points. The expense would not exceed £75,000 or £100,000 a-year—not a fifth part of that which every one of these disastrous struggles costs the community, independent altogether of the widespread suffering and fearful demoralisation which they invariably occasion.*

61. What is required in these cases to guard against the evil.

* At the moment in which these lines are written (28th May 1856), a strike of colliers and iron-miners in Lanarkshire, and the two adjoining counties of Linlithgow and Ayr, embracing 35,000 workmen, has continued above three months, kept 120,000 persons, including families, during all that time, in a state of penury and idleness, and cost Scotland at least £700,000! The strike of colliers in 1837, in Lanarkshire, cost the nation £400,000; that of the cotton-spinners, which led to the proceedings mentioned in the text, £230,000 in the same year! The strike of colliers in the same county, in 1842, lasted four months, and cost the nation at least £500,000; that of the same body, in 1848, nearly us much; and on the last occasion, the men struck because offered only

CHAP. XXXVII.

1839.

62. Rise of Chartism from the same general distress.

Combinations among workmen, how great soever a social evil, do not necessarily lead to disaffection toward the Government; on the contrary, they often coexist with the strongest feelings of loyalty towards the sovereign. Being directed against the employers, not the constituted authorities, they may go on for some time without being merged in political discontent. But the transition is easy from the one to the other, the more especially as they both spring from the same cause, viz. the experience of suffering or disappointment, owing to change of prices, among the working classes. The machinery got up, and often so successfully worked, to effect a rise or prevent a reduction of wages, can by an easy transfer be directed against the Government; there can be a "secret select" to get quit of a sovereign, as well as to murder an obnoxious master or terrify a refractory fellow-workman. It is not surprising, therefore, that the same long-continued suffering which produced such formidable trades-unions in 1837 and 1838, should have led also to a serious political combination. Hence the rise of CHARTISM, which, in these melancholy years, spread its roots widely among the manufacturing and mining districts, and came at length to embrace nearly the whole working classes in these employments in every part of the country. Suffering was so general—it may be said universal—from the low rate of wages, the rigorous execution of the new poor-law, and the numerous insolvencies among the employers, that the working classes were driven well-nigh to desperation, and led to lend a willing ear to those artful dema-

4s. a-day, and came in, after 7 months' idleness, at 2s. 9d. The great strike at Preston, in 1854, lasted 37 weeks, involved 15,000 persons in misery, and occasioned an enormous loss. No one, not practically acquainted with these matters, can conceive the misery and demoralisation these long periods of idleness produce; the sad bequest of a currency dependent on the retention of gold, which, in the nature of things, cannot be always retained. Whenever the Author sees a serious drain of gold setting in on the Bank of England, he anticipates, at no distant period, a protracted strike; and he has never, during thirty years, been wrong in his predictions on that matter.

gogues who represented it as entirely owing to the weight of taxes and the profligate expenditure of Government, and that the only remedy for it was to be found in the general emancipation of industry and reduction of burdens, by vesting the entire direction of affairs in the hands of the people. They did not propose to dethrone the sovereign, or openly establish a commonwealth: it was "a throne surrounded by republican institutions" which was the object of their desire. Their demands were reduced to six, styled the "Six Points of the Charter," which became the watchword of the discontented in every part of the empire, and never ceased to agitate the country with more or less violence, till the hostility of the middle classes to those changes was clearly evinced during the general convulsion of 1848, and the cause of suffering and consequent discontent was removed by the huge banks of issue opened by Providence in California and Australia.

63. Six points of the Charter, and causes of their popularity.

These Six Points, which became so well known in English history, were—1st, Universal Suffrage; 2d, Vote by Ballot; 3d, Paid Representatives in Parliament; 4th, Equal Electoral Districts; 5th, The Abolition of a Property Qualification; 6th, Annual Parliaments. These principles were not new in social history; they were nothing but a brief summary of those which had desolated France and Spain, and from the first dawn of civilisation had been more or less contended for wherever freedom had spread its roots. But the universal suffering of the working classes rendered their reception much more easy and general at this time than they had ever before been in English history. Suffering led to its natural result, general discontent. So general did this discontent become, that an organisation of Chartists took place over the whole manufacturing cities of the empire, for the purpose of electing deputies, who were to represent the whole body in a national convention,

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

which was to sit in London, and which would soon, it was hoped, come to supersede the legitimate Parliament. An enormous petition, professing to be signed by 1,200,000 Chartists, and certainly bearing that number of names, was presented to the House of Commons by Mr Attwood, on 14th June 1839. But from the proof obtained, ten years afterwards, of the way in which petitions of that description were got up, and false signatures appended to them, to be hereafter detailed, it may be doubted whether the real signatures ever amounted to half the number.[1]

[1] Spectator, 1839, 557; Ann. Reg. 1839; Mart. ii. 304, 411.

64. Real objects of the Chartist hostility.

Although the Chartists professed, and really desired, great political as well as social changes, yet the former were considered by them only a step to the latter. The movement was essentially social, and it was directed rather against the capitalists than the Government. As such it merits very particular attention, for it was the first indication which appeared in this country of the SOCIALIST AGITATION which, ten years after, overturned the Government of Louis Philippe, and worked such important effects on the monarchy of France. The object of the Chartists was, at bottom, to obtain a new distribution of the profits of manufacturing or mining industry. The movement did not extend to the agricultural districts, and the rural population remained from first to last almost entire strangers to it. Their real hostility was against the capitalist, whom they regarded as a middleman, interposed between them and the purchasers of the produce of their industry, and who succeeded in realising enormous profits at their expense. The profits of stock they regarded as an unjust and improper deduction from the remuneration of industry, which should extend to the whole price of its produce, under deduction of the cost of the raw material.[2] On these principles they kept studiously aloof from the movement which, from the excessively high price of provisions, had begun against the Corn

[2] Ann. Reg. 1839, 304, 305; Mart. ii. 411.

Laws, holding that any reduction in the price of the necessaries of life would turn to the profit of the masters, by occasioning a proportional or even greater fall in the wages of labour.

65. Rise and progress of the Chartist movement.

The Chartist agitation first became formidable in the latter months of 1838, when the high price of provisions, coupled with the low wages of labour, had rendered suffering of the severest kind almost universal among the manufacturing classes, and the strict execution of the new poor-law put the relief afforded from the public funds under restrictions to which they were not willing to submit. So extensive did the agitation then become, that Government held Mr Stephens, one of their leaders, to bail on a charge of sedition; but this step, instead of checking the movement, only rendered it more violent and widespread. Meetings were held at the principal manufacturing towns, at which language the most violent was indulged in by the orators, among whom Messrs Oastler and Feargus O'Connor stood forth as conspicuous. Mr Attwood, on the 15th July, moved that the petition should be referred to a select committee, but the motion was negatived by a majority of 281 to 189. The agitation only became the greater on this event; for the orators had now the just and popular topic to dwell upon, that the legislature had refused even to take their grievances into consideration. At a great meeting held on Kersal Moor, near Manchester, 200,000 persons are said to have been assembled; and although the numbers were doubtless very much exaggerated, yet there was certainly such an array as had not been seen in that vicinity since the famous Peterloo assemblage in 1817, already recounted.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xlix. 274; Ann. Reg. 1839, 306; Mart. ii. 410, 411.

However much the leaders of a movement of this description may wish to keep it free from popular violence, and thereby shun the risk of alienating the shopkeepers and middle classes, it has never been found practicable to continue for any length of time in this rational and mea-

CHAP. XXXVII.

1839.

66. Chartist riot in the Bullring, Birmingham.

sured course. Sooner or later the aroused passions of the multitude impel them into deeds of violence, and the cause itself is brought into general discredit from the atrocities to which it has been found to lead. This truth—of which examples are perpetually recurring and forgotten—was strikingly exemplified on the present occasion. The Chartist rioting of 1839 was of the most alarming description. In April there was a serious riot in Devizes, in consequence of an intrusion of a thousand Chartists, armed with bludgeons, into the marketplace of that town, to hold a public meeting. This was followed by a still more violent outbreak in Birmingham, on the 4th, and again in the middle of July. A crowd had there assembled on a piece of open ground called Holloway Head, in expectation of hearing Mr Attwood address them; but in this they were disappointed, as he did not make his appearance. Several orators recommended them, upon this, to form in line, and parade the streets in an orderly manner. Instead of doing so, they broke into small parties, which ere long united in the Bullring, the chief open place of the city, from whence they proceeded down Moor Street, and made an attack on the police-office there. Though a body of police were in the inner yard of the building, yet as there was no magistrate at hand to head them, and they were forbidden to act without orders, they did not move; and the mob were permitted to break the whole windows of the building without resistance. Emboldened by this impunity, the crowd, now swelled to several thousand persons, proceeded back to the Bullring, where they commenced a violent attack upon houses and property of every description. No sort of weapon came amiss to the infuriated multitude: "Furor arma ministrat." Broken flag-staves, heavy bludgeons, old scythes, paling-stobs, iron rails torn up, were instantly put into requisition; and with these, amidst loud yells, they commenced an attack upon the wealthiest and most respectable houses in the Square. The whole furniture

July 15. April 15.

July 4.

July 15.

and effects they contained were carried into the centre of the Square, and there set fire to, in a huge pile, amidst the cries and howlings of demons. Not content with this, they carried back the burning materials to the houses, to commence a general conflagration, and two were soon in flames. Besides those consumed by fire, twenty houses or shops were utterly gutted and destroyed in little more than an hour, when the Chartists were masters of the Square. At length a body of police, followed by a party of three hundred of the Rifles, and a troop of the 4th Dragoons under Colonel Chatterton, made their appearance, and were received with loud cheers by the respectable inhabitants. The Chartists immediately fled; and several attempts to reassemble next day were defeated by the energetic conduct of Colonel Chatterton and the military, as well as the civic authorities, now fully aroused to a sense of their danger.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1839, 307; Chron. 109, 112, 307; Mart. ii. 411, 412.

67. Declaration of the Duke of Wellington on the subject, and great moral effect of the outbreak.

When this alarming outbreak came to be discussed in Parliament, the Duke of Wellington said in the House of Lords, that "he had seen as much of war as most men; but he had never seen a town carried by assault, subjected to such violence, as Birmingham had been during an hour by its own inhabitants." This statement, coming from the general who had seen what followed the assault of Badajos and St Sebastian, made a very great impression; and the middle classes everywhere saw the necessity of rallying round the magistrates and civic authorities, if they would avoid the fate of the Bullring. Chartist assemblages, accordingly, held at Clerkenwell near London, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Manchester, Stockport, and other places, were vigorously met by the now thoroughly alarmed authorities, and dispersed with more or less violence. There is seldom any great difficulty in preserving the public peace when the magistrates are sure of being supported by the Government.[2] It is timidity in high places which leads to audacity in low. So general was the impression produced by this outbreak, and the reaction

[2] Parl. Deb. July 18, 1839; Ann. Reg. 1839, 307; Mart. ii. 412, 413.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

against Chartist violence by which it was followed, that the Attorney-general did not hesitate to say publicly that "Chartism was extinct, and would never again be revived."

68. Mr John Frost and the Newport riot.

The event soon proved, however, that this exalted functionary was mistaken in his expectation, and that political maladies, arising, like Chartism, out of long-continued and widespread suffering, are not to be extirpated by the mere failure of the external eruptions to which they have given rise. Among the many improper persons whom the zeal of their Liberal supporters had in many places forced upon the Government, one of the most improper was Mr John Frost, a linendraper at Newport, who had been made a justice of peace for the borough of Newport in entire ignorance of his real character. When the Chartist agitation began, in the autumn of 1838, he had made a very violent and dangerous speech in that town, for which he was immediately called to account, with great propriety, by Lord John Russell, as Home Secretary, and narrowly escaped being at once removed from the magistracy. This lenity afterwards proved to have been entirely thrown away: so far from being induced to halt in his career by the indulgence shown to his first transgression, Frost seems to have only regarded it as a symptom of fear on the part of Government, which rendered it safe for him to advance in it. A plan was laid in profound secresy between Frost himself, Williams, who kept a beer-shop at Coalbrookdale, and Jones, a watchmaker in Pontypool. Each of these persons was to command a division of insurgents, who were to unite at Risca, at dead of night on 3d November, and march into Newport, when the military were to be surrounded and made prisoners, the bridge over the Usk broken down, and rockets sent up from the adjoining hills to rouse the country.[1] It was agreed with their confederates at Birmingham, that the non-arrival of the mail within an hour and a half of its customary time should be considered as

[1] Ann. Reg. 1839, 314, 315; Mart. ii. 413.

a signal that the insurrection had succeeded at Newport, which was to be immediately followed by a general rising at Birmingham and in all the northern counties, and proclamation of the Charter as the law of the land.

69. Attack on Newport, and its failure.

With whatever caution the secret of these arrangements had been preserved, it was impossible that the requisite orders could be given to ten or twelve thousand men to assemble in hostile array, without some intelligence on the subject reaching the magistrates of the district. Those of Newport did their duty on this occasion with a prudence and courage which may serve as a model to civic authorities on all similar occasions. They did the one thing needful on such occasions—they looked the danger boldly in the face, and made preparations against it *before* it came. The mayor, Mr Phillips, with the chief magistrates, took post in the principal inn, called the Westgate Hotel; and as soon as it was ascertained that the Chartists were marching on the town, an application was made to a body of military in the neighbourhood, and thirty men under Lieut. Grey were obtained, and posted in the hotel. Meanwhile Frost arrived at the point of junction, and finding that the other divisions had not yet arrived, he set out with his own, 5000 strong, partially armed with muskets, and arrived in Newport. He then made straight for the Westgate Hotel, and summoned the special constables at its door to surrender. This being refused, an attack was made upon them. The door was quickly forced open with crowbars and hatchets, and the tumultuous crowd burst, with loud cheers, into the lobby. But meanwhile the magistrates and military in the floor above were not idle. Mr Phillips and Lieut. Grey each opened a shutter of the low window which looked upon the street, which was immediately followed by a shower of balls from the Chartists below, by which the former and several other persons were wounded. But never did the superiority of courage and discipline appear more clearly than on this occasion. The soldiers, admirably

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

directed, opened a continued and sustained fire both upon the insurgents without and those in the lobby within, and with such effect that, after a few rounds, during which twenty fell, the whole broke and fled. Frost himself was not seen on the theatre of conflict, but he was arrested in Newport that evening, as were Jones and Williams, who had arrived ten minutes too late at the point of rendezvous. These three persons were afterwards indicted for high treason, and found guilty; but their lives were spared, though with great difficulty, by the leniency of the Crown, in consequence of a technical legal difficulty on which the judges were divided. Mr Phillips, who recovered from his wound, was with great propriety knighted by the Queen for his gallantry on the occasion. Every right-thinking man must rejoice at the honour thus worthily bestowed; for what said Napoleon?—"There is one death more glorious than that of a soldier on the field of battle; it is that of a magistrate on the threshold of the hall of justice in defence of the law."[1]*

[1] Ann. Reg. 1839, 315, 316; Mart. ii. 413.

70. Origin of the Anti-Corn-Law League. Sept. 18, 1838.

This decided defeat suppressed for a time any similar Chartist outbreaks, though it was far from putting an end to the profound feelings of discontent in which it originated, and which broke out, three years after, in alarming strikes and combination riots amounting to insurrection, both in England and Scotland. But meanwhile another movement was commencing under wiser directions, and supported by greater wealth, which was not destined to be of such ephemeral duration, and which, springing up from small beginnings, ere long acquired such consistency and strength as enabled it to modify, in a most important respect, the commercial policy of the country. On the 18th September 1838, a public dinner

* Frost was, after his transportation, restored to Great Britain by the general amnesty passed on occasion of the glorious peace with Russia in 1856. The first use he made of his liberty, on his release, was to make a decided, though happily abortive, attempt to renew the Chartist agitation in London; a proceeding on his part which both demonstrated how righteous had been his previous sentence, and undeserved the lenity which led to its relaxation.

was given to Mr Bowring, whose labours in behalf of an unrestrained commercial intercourse among nations had long attracted attention, at Manchester, which was attended by only sixty persons. Though so few in number, they were united in conviction and resolute in spirit, and they at once formed themselves into a society for promoting the principles of Free Trade. They commenced operations in the most business-like way, and soon showed that they well knew how the foundations of a great national superstructure are to be laid. They opened subscription lists, when large sums were put down by the leading firms, obtained the sanction of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, and recommended the formation of similar societies in all the great manufacturing towns of the kingdom. With such success were their efforts attended, that, before February 1839, associations of the same sort were established in London, Birmingham, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, and other great towns, which soon became connected together, and formed a great association for establishing the principles of Free Trade, especially in grain. Such was the origin of the ANTI-CORN-LAW LEAGUE, which gradually drew to itself nearly all the commercial and manufacturing industry of the country, and worked such wonders in the modifications of its future policy.[1]

[1] Mart. ii. 415; Ann. Reg. 1839, 204.

71. Cause of the success of the Anti-Corn-Law League.

The reason of this rapid progress, as of success in all similar changes, is to be found in the fact that as the Anti-Corn-Law League proposed to rectify the great existing evil generally felt, so it originated in the experience of suffering universally diffused. It sprang from the same source as the Chartist agitation among the operative masses. Both arose from the ruinous effects of the fall of prices produced by the contraction of the currency necessarily induced under the existing system by the bad seasons, and each was intended to throw the effects of that fall off themselves and upon their neighbours. The Chartists proposed to do this by establishing a frame of govern-

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

ment which, by giving them, through the force of numbers, the command of the State, should enable them to abolish the entire class of employers and capitalists, and to divide, on the Communist principle, the whole profits of stock among those engaged in labour. The Anti-Corn-Law League proposed to extricate the masters out of the difficulty arising from the fall of prices by diminishing the price of food, without any regard to the effect of such reduction upon those engaged in its production, and thus effecting a considerable diminution in the cost of the production of manufactured articles. Both parties felt the pressure, and each, after the usual fashion of human nature, proposed to ease itself by throwing it upon its neighbour. And neither saw, what the event ere long proved, and what was clearly demonstrated in 1852 and 1853, that the existing evil was entirely artificial, and of human creation, and that without tearing society to pieces by rousing the antagonism of class against class, the whole existing evils might be remedied by the simple expedient of arresting the fall of prices by the establishment of a currency not liable to be drawn away, and adequate to the increasing wants of the nation.

72. Mr Cobden and Mr Villiers, and first proceedings in Parliament on the subject.

Mr RICHARD COBDEN was the leader of the movement in the country, Mr Villiers, the member for Wolverhampton, in the House of Commons. Both were men of vigour and capacity, and eminently fitted for the task they had undertaken. Possessed of strong good-sense and powerful natural talents, Mr Cobden had none of the general views or systematic caution which arises from an enlarged acquaintance with human affairs, and the habit of reflecting on their varied and complicated interests. He saw one great evil before his face, which was the fall in the price of manufactured articles, and he saw only one remedy for it, which was to effect a corresponding reduction in the cost of their production. This could only be done by cheapening the price of subsistence, and so reducing the wages of labour; and to this object all his

efforts accordingly were directed. He was sure of a willing audience wherever he went; cheap bread is a cry to which the working classes, especially when really suffering, are never insensible. The ultimate effect of cheap wages is a remote consequence, to which comparatively few are alive. Cobden was a powerful political fanatic. He pursued his favourite *single idea* of free trade in corn with the same sincerity and vigour with which Mr O'Connell at the same time was pursuing his chimera of the repeal of the Union, or with which he himself afterwards advocated the disbanding our troops, and selling our ships of the line, and crumpling up Russia like a sheet of paper in his hand. To produce a great public movement, a cry must be *simple and single*—complication or multiplicity are alike fatal to any general excitement. If the Chartists had had one point in their Charter instead of six, the fate of their movement might have been widely different from what it actually was.

73. Free Kirk movement in Scotland.

Connected with these great political agitations, and, though far less important in its consequences, not less characteristic of the temper of the times, a movement took place at this time in Scotland, which has been attended with lasting effects upon the ecclesiastical establishment of that country, and, on account of its singularity, merits a brief notice even in general history. It originated in the passion for independence, and chafing against control, which are in so remarkable a manner inherent in the Scotch character, and which have at different periods produced the most important results in British history. In the fourteenth century it inflicted the most severe defeat upon the arms of England which they ever sustained, and prolonged for three centuries the national independence; in the seventeenth century it gave victory to the English Parliament when its forces were yielding to the increasing vigour of the Royalists; and in the nineteenth it secured the triumph of the same party in working out the Reform Bill, and has returned the

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

Liberal party in power for twenty years, after the majority of the constituencies in England and Wales had decided for the other side. Whether from their remote situation, or the secluded nature of their country, or the character of original descent, the Scotch are singularly tenacious of old ideas; and the principles of the Solemn League and Covenant were as rife in their hills and moors as when, two centuries before, they marched to the support of the sinking English Puritans at Marston Moor.

74. Origin of the secession, and severance of the Scotch Church.

Among a people of such a character, and so situated, it was not to be expected that the many causes which had produced such a ferment in southern Britain should fail in occasioning a serious convulsion. But following the direction of the national temperament, which is eminently, and in a most remarkable manner, prone to theological disputes, the general fervour fastened not upon the State, but the Church, as the theatre for the exercise of its powers. Independence of all temporal authority in spiritual concerns became as general a passion as national independence had been in the days of Wallace and Bruce. Though it was the Church, not the State, which was split asunder, the movement was democratic, not religious. It was not a contest for doctrine, principle, or form of worship, but for the appointment of the clergy. The existing law had vested the right of nomination in the patrons of parishes, but a large portion of the Presbyterians held it should be intrusted to a majority of the congregations in communion with the Church. The General Assembly of the Church, in conformity with early precedent, and yielding to the prevailing fervour of the times, had in 1834 passed an Act, well known under the name of the Veto Act, which empowered presbyteries to refuse to sanction the appointment of ministers who were disapproved of by a majority of the heads of families in the respective congregations. As this Act practically took the appointment out of the hands of the patrons, it was

made the subject of legal trial in the noted case of Auchterarder; and the Court of Session and House of Peers successively decided in favour of the patron, thereby nullifying the ecclesiastical Veto Act of 1834. Upon this, Dr Chalmers brought forward a motion in the General Assembly of the Church, which, while it enjoined obedience to the decrees of the courts of law, so far as the civil rights of patrons are concerned, asserted in the most express terms the principle of *Non-Intrusion*, as it was called, or the right of the majority of parishioners to put a *veto* upon the appointment of any minister who was displeasing to them.* This resolution was carried by a majority of 36, the numbers being 197 to 161. As the effect of this resolution was to put the Church, on religious rights, directly at variance with the declared law of the land, it could not fail to lead to a schism. Lord Dalhousie said, "I shall not again consent to sit in any Church which, gloss it as you may, has resolved doggedly, but virtually, to set at defiance the law of the land. The knell is now rung of the Establishment of the Church of Scotland." It was followed, accordingly, by a secession of about two-thirds of the clergy of the Established Church from their cures, and the establishment of a vast dissenting church in every part of the country, which ere long came to number seven hundred congregations in its bosom.[1]

May 3, 1839.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1839, 302.

75. Effects of the schism.

The effects of this great schism, as of most similar movements which originate in the wants and are supported by the feelings of a large portion of the people, have been partly beneficial, partly injurious. On the one hand, it has led to the establishment of a new or additional church, supported entirely by voluntary contribu-

* "And whereas the principle of non-intrusion is now coeval with the reformed Kirk of Scotland, and forms an integral part of its constitution embodied in its standards, and declared in various Acts of Assembly, the General Assembly resolved that this principle cannot be abandoned, and that no presentee should be forced upon any parish contrary to the will of the congregation."—Dr CHALMERS' Resolution, May 22, 1839; *Ann. Reg.*, 1839, p. 302.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

tions, and which, like all similar voluntary establishments, in the first instance at least, has been supported with uncommon liberality on the part of the congregations, and adorned by a splendid array of oratorical ability on the part of the pastors. In a community where manufacturing and mining undertakings, on a very extended scale, have congregated the working classes in huge and neglected masses in particular localities, there can be no doubt that this has proved in many cases a very great benefit; and it may be doubted whether any old establishment, or anything but the fervour of an infant voluntary church, could have effected it. It has adorned our cities with splendid structures, and in many places brought to the destitute and debased portion of our people the light of Christian faith. On the other hand, it has induced many evils nearly as formidable—some, it is to be feared, still more lasting. It has brought to an unparalleled degree the bitterness of sectarian division into private life; divided brother against sister, father against child; turned charity itself, the bond of peace, into party channels; starved down the great establishments which, without any distinction of creed, look only to the alleviation of human suffering; rendered a poor-law universal and unavoidable from the absorption of a large portion of the funds of charity in the support of a new ecclesiastical establishment,* differing from the former in no respect except in the parties in whom the choice of the minister is vested, and in its being supported entirely by voluntary contributions drawn chiefly from the working classes. But

* The subscriptions to the Glasgow Infirmary, which is open to the sick and infirm of all nations and creeds, are now (1856) less than they were forty years ago, when the city had not a fourth of its present inhabitants, or a tenth of its present wealth. Nearly all the catholic (not Roman Catholic) charitable establishments are labouring under similar difficulties, while the poor-rate, then unknown, or a mere trifle, now amounts to £80,000 a-year, and was £120,000 in 1849. On the other hand, £130,000 has, within the last six years, been expended in building Free kirks in that city, and its ministers are as numerous, and have larger congregations, than the Established Church, and are nearly as comfortable.

whichever of these opposite sets of considerations may be deemed to preponderate, there can be but one feeling, and that of unmixed admiration, for the many conscientious and courageous men who, actuated by a sense of duty for what they considered a point of conscience, abandoned the sweets of home, independence, and long-cherished associations.

76. Reflections on this subject.

This question of the party in whom the appointment of the clergy should be vested, is one of general importance, and has distracted many ages; and though it appeared first in Scotland in these times, which is pre-eminently a religious nation, yet it is of general interest, and will come to shake other countries besides the land of the mountain and the flood. Leaving it to theologians to determine whether the Divine grace is most likely to follow the "apostolic succession" in which some of the Episcopalians believe, or the popular election for which the Presbyterians contend, it is the duty of the temporal historian to apply himself to the practical and momentous question, In what way are good and faithful pastors for the people most likely to be secured? And the same principle will probably be found to apply here which regulates mere worldly appointments. No lasting security is to be found for a proper selection but in *singleness of patronage, coupled with reality of responsibility for its exercise.* There is no doubt that there was great truth in what the zealous Presbyterians alleged, that patronage in Scotland had run very much into a mode of providing sinecure retreats for decayed tutors in families, whose abilities, never very considerable, had been entirely worn out in teaching idle boys the rudiments of the dead languages. On the other hand, although, in the first fervour of innovation, much talent, especially of an oratorical kind, has been imported into the Free Kirk, yet the continuance of such disinterested feelings is not to be permanently relied on, and little security

CHAP XXXVII. 1839.

is to be found for right appointments in the majority of a promiscuous multitude of five or six hundred persons, in whom numbers have destroyed the sense of responsibility without conferring the power of discrimination. Many improper appointments may be laid to the door of the Cabinet, when no one often knows by whom appointments are really made; but such complaints are seldom heard in regard to the filling up of judicial offices, which is known to be done by the Lord Chancellor, under the vigilant surveillance of the Bar. Perhaps when the first heats consequent on the Disruption have passed away with the generation in which they arose, it will be found that the present system in the Established Church of Scotland, by which a list of five or six persons is presented by the patron to the congregation, and they make choice of the one whom they prefer, and which permits objections to be made, on cause shown, in the church courts, is the one which presents the fairest chance of lasting success in a matter in which a choice of difficulties is to be expected, and provision is to be made rather against the ultimate inroads of selfishness than for the present admission of zeal.

77. Affairs of Canada.

When so many causes, some deeply affecting material interests, others keenly arousing political or religious fervour, were agitating the mother country, it was not to be expected that the colonies could escape convulsion. Least of all was this to be looked for in Canada, the lower province of which, nearly equally divided between persons professing the Romish and Protestant faith, presented a fair field for O'Connell's intrigues; while the upper, exposed to the constant influx of several thousand discontented emigrants from Ireland, afforded a growing nucleus of Radicalism utterly at variance with the general and devoted loyalty of its inhabitants. The progress of the dissensions has already been detailed, which for several years had divided the House of Representa-

tives and the executive, the decision of which had been postponed, not effected, by successive governor-generals. But at length matters came to a crisis, and appeal was made by both sides to the sword. The Canadian revolutionists contended that the Senate or Upper House, which had hitherto, according to the analogy of the British constitution, been appointed by the Crown, should be elected by the people; and that the executive should be rendered accountable to the House of Representatives. The first demand was naturally suggested by the analogy of America, where the Senate is so elected, though by a double election; the latter was strictly in accordance with the British constitution. The demand, however, was made in such menacing terms, and it had been preceded by so long a course of passive resistance, in the form of withholding the supplies in the province, that it was resisted by Government, and negatived by the House of Commons, after a long debate, by a majority of 269 to 46. "Look," said Sir Robert Peel, who supported the Government on this occasion, "at the position of Lower Canada, commanding the entrance of the mouth of the St Lawrence, and then ask if a population of half a million had a right to insist upon a measure which, in the heart of the British colonies in North America, *would establish a French republic.*"[1]

[1] 1 Parl. Deb. xxxvi. 1304, xxxvi. 1290; Ann. Reg. 1837, 167-169.

78. Different temper of Lower and Upper Canada.

The difference between the temper of the people in Lower and Upper Canada at once appeared upon the receipt of this intelligence. The *habitans* of the lower province were instantly in a ferment, and the leading demagogues made a skilful use of the agitation to fan the flame into a conflagration. Confidently relying on Mr O'Connell and the Irish Catholic members, who composed the chief part of the majority which retained Ministers in power, to avert any extreme measures, they vigorously proceeded to stimulate instant insurrection. Armed men assembled in great numbers to listen to the most violent and seditious harangues, in which the tyranny of the

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

British Parliament was vehemently denounced, and the example of the United States of America held up, amidst loud cheers, as an example to be imitated on a crisis similar to that which had now occurred. Government did not venture to prosecute the leaders of the movement; they were well aware, in the temper of the province, they would immediately be acquitted. A great meeting was held at St Charles, in the county of Richelieu, where a column was erected surmounted by a Cap of Liberty, at the foot of which PAPINEAU, the leader of the movement, was presented with a patriotic address by his admiring countrymen, who, marching in regular bands to the foot of the column, placed their hands on it, and solemnly devoted themselves to the service of their country. This imposing ceremony was followed by processions of the "Sons of Liberty" through the streets of Montreal, met by others styled the "Loyalists," which led to serious encounters, in which the former were generally worsted. On the other hand, so different was the temper of the upper province, that its governor, Sir Francis Head, having dissolved its Assembly in the close of 1836, the new house returned was decidedly in favour of Government by a majority of 40 to 20. Instead of joining their brethren in Lower Canada in the chase of visionary improvements in the contest for organic changes, they set themselves to work, like real men of business, to remedy experienced evils, and voted the large sum of £500,000 for the formation of roads and bridges, which, by opening up its immense resources, laid the foundation of the subsequent unexampled progress of that portion of the British dominions.[1]

[1] Mart. ii. 379, 380; Ann. Reg. 1839, 241, 251.

79. Great effects in Canada of the American crusade against the banks.

Deprived in this manner of the prospect of support from the majority, at least, in the upper province, it is probable that Papineau and the revolutionists of the lower would have hesitated in coming to an actual appeal to arms, were it not that an accidental circumstance, arising from a foreign cause, introduced a division and dis-

content into the upper province, which encouraged them to proceed with their insurrectionary measures. This was the crusade against the banks in the United States, already explained, brought to a crisis by General Jackson's desperate attempt to destroy paper credit in the spring of 1837. The effects of that course of measures, so ruinous both to the United States and Great Britain, were felt with equal or even greater severity in the British provinces of North America. The general suspension of cash payments in New York, Philadelphia, and the principal commercial States of the Union, rendered a similar measure indispensable on the Canadian side of the frontier; for else the whole cash in the banks of both provinces would be instantly drawn out to meet the necessities of the United States banks, themselves on the verge of insolvency from General Jackson's desperate measures. So universally was this felt to be the case, and so generally was it understood that the difficulties of the Canadian banks were owing to no faults or instability of their own, but to the pressure arising from foreign legislation, that the suspension of cash payments announced by the Quebec and some other banks met with general approbation and support. In vain the Governor, acting upon the maxims of the Home Government, adjured the banks in the most solemn terms to abide by their engagements, and not to suspend cash payments as long as they had a dollar in their coffers; the necessity of the case, and the clear appreciation of the *foreign nature* of the difficulty, overpowered every other consideration; and after a special session of parliament had been held in the upper province to consider the commercial difficulties which had occurred, a general suspension of cash payments took place. Like that in England in 1797 and 1848, this measure relieved the banks without injuring public credit; and when the foreign drain ceased, cash payments were resumed without any shock to the lasting stability of those valuable establishments.[1] But in

May 22, 1837.

[1] Sir Francis Head to the Banks of Canada, May 22, 1837; Ann. Reg. 1837, 242-247.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

the mean time the derangement of commerce and abridging of private credit were extreme; and from the number of persons thus involved in difficulties, the revolutionary wedge was introduced into Upper Canada, though fortunately without being able to penetrate far.

80. Approach of the contest in Lower Canada.

In Lower Canada things bore a much more unpromising aspect, and the symptoms of an approaching convulsion soon became painfully apparent. The provincial parliament assembled on the 18th August; but no sooner were the resolutions of the House of Commons of March preceding communicated to them than they presented a long address, complaining bitterly of the tyrannical conduct of the Imperial Parliament, and announced their intention "of suspending their deliberations until the consummation of the reforms, and that of the Legislative Council above all, announced by and in the name of the imperial authorities." The Governor, Lord Gosford, described "the voluntary and continued abandonment of their functions by one branch of the legislature as a virtual annihilation of the constitution." The parliament was of course prorogued, and both parties prepared to decide the question by force of arms. The military authorities did the utmost to render the small force at their disposal as efficient as possible. Two regiments were brought from Halifax, where, happily, disaffection was unknown, to Lower Canada; and a great meeting was held at Montreal of the Loyalists, when it was unanimously resolved to raise several regiments of volunteers to support the Government, which were immediately filled up with bold and resolute men, whose gallant bearing might well have made the insurgents hesitate before they hazarded all on an appeal to arms. At the same time, Sir Francis Head, in the upper province, felt so confident in the loyalty and steadiness of the inhabitants that he not only sent all the regular troops out of the province into Lower Canada,[1] but declined the offer of two

Aug. 28.

[1] Mart. ii. 379, 380; Ann. Reg. 1839, 247-249.

regiments of militia, and one of volunteers, who offered to do garrison duty in the absence of the Queen's troops.

81. Commencement of the insurrection. Nov. 22.

Government in the lower province, though perfectly aware that an insurrection was approaching, for long delayed taking any decided step to arrest it, from a desire, natural and generally laudable, to put their opponents in the wrong, by letting them take the lead in the adoption of warlike measures. At length, as it was ascertained that Papineau and his confederates had taken up their quarters in the villages of St Denis and St Charles, on the right bank of the river Richelieu, and that armed forces were there assembled, it was resolved to arrest them; and warrants to that effect were put into the hands of the civil officers, who were supported by military force. Colonel Gore, with five companies of regulars, a few mounted police, and a six-pounder, moved on the night of the 22d November from Sorel on St Denis, from which it was sixteen miles distant. After a fatiguing night-march of twelve hours over roads rendered almost impassable by heavy rains, they arrived at daylight at the village, which they found strongly barricaded, and its entrance defended by 1500 men posted in stone houses, from which a severe and well-directed fire was opened on the troops who advanced to the assault. The resistance was so determined, and the superiority of the insurgents so great, that after having exhausted all their ammunition in an ineffectual fire, the troops were obliged to return with the loss of six killed and ten wounded. To add to the mortification of the soldiers, the badness of the roads rendered it necessary to abandon the field-piece during the retreat; and Lieut. Weir, who had fallen wounded into the hands of the insurgents, was barbarously murdered by them in cold blood.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1838, 10.

On the same night on which this ill-starred expedition took place against St Denis, Colonel Wetherell, with five companies of infantry, a party of mounted police, and

CHAP. XXXVII.

1837.

two guns, moved from Chambly upon St Charles. More fortunate than his gallant brother officer, Col. Wetherell met with decisive success. He did not reach St Charles, owing to the badness of the roads and the destruction of the bridges, till noon on the 25th; but when he arrived there the works were stormed in the most gallant style, in despite of an obstinate resistance from the insurgents. The village, with the exception of one house, became a prey to the flames: the victors lost only three killed and eighteen wounded. Hearing of this success, the rebels precipitately abandoned their position at St Denis, which Col. Gore entered without opposition on the 4th December. This success was followed by the complete dispersion of the armed bands on the banks both of the Richelieu and the Yamaska, and the flight of their leaders into the United States. One of these, named Brown, made his escape early, and lost the confidence of his followers by his pusillanimous conduct; another, Wolfred Nelson, a brave man, was captured by a party of volunteers before he got over the border.[1]

82. Success of Colonel Wetherell at St Charles. Nov. 25.

Dec. 4.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1837, 10.

These successes enabled Sir John Colborne, a veteran of Waterloo fame, to direct his chief disposable force into the country of the Two Mountains, where the strength of the insurgents lay, and where it was known they were strongly intrenched. His force, including several companies of gallant volunteers, amounted to 1300 men. The first point which presented itself for attack was the village of St Eustache on the left bank of the Ottawa, which was strongly occupied by the insurgents. Alarmed by the approach of forces so considerable, a large part of them, including their commander, Girod, took to flight before the assault commenced. Four hundred, however, under Dr Chenier, threw themselves into a church and some adjoining buildings, where they made a most resolute stand. After a severe fire of two hours' duration, their barricades were beat down by the British artillery, the church was set on fire, the houses

83. Decisive success of Sir John Colborne at St Eustache. Dec. 14.

wrapt in flames, and their brave defenders driven out at the point of the bayonet. An hundred of the insurgents, including Chenier, were killed, and an hundred and twenty made prisoners. Girod, having been taken prisoner in the course of his flight, shot himself. On the following day Colborne advanced on St Benoit, where the chief body of the insurgents was understood to be posted; but on entering it, the town was found to be deserted except by two hundred insurgents, who laid down their arms, and were dismissed to their homes. Unfortunately, such was the state of exasperation of the Loyalists in the British army at the state of proscription in which they had been long kept by their enemies, that they set fire to the village, which was in great part consumed before the flames could be extinguished by the soldiers of the Royals, 32d, and 83d, who had been engaged in this brilliant affair.[1]

[1] Sir John Colborne's Despatch, Dec. 16, 1837, London Gazette; Ann. Reg. 1838, 11-13.

84. Great results of these successes.

"Thus," said Lord Gosford, with justifiable pride, in his despatches, "have the measures adopted for putting down this reckless revolt been crowned with success. Wherever an armed body has shown itself, it has been completely dispersed; the principal leaders and instigators have been killed, taken, or forced into exile; there is no longer a head, or concert, or organisation among the deluded and betrayed *habitans;* all the newspaper organs of revolution in the province, the *Vindicie*, *Minerve*, and *Liberal*, are no longer in existence, having ceased to appear in the commencement of the trouble; and in the short space of a month, a rebellion which at first wore so threatening an aspect, has, with much less loss of life than could have been expected, been effectually put down." It was not at first known what had become of Papineau, the leader of the insurrection, but it was ere long ascertained that he had reached New York in safety, having made his escape in the very commencement of the conflict. His conduct in heading it was the more inexcusable that he was well aware of the

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

advantages which had accrued to Canada from the English connection, and had himself expressed them in the most emphatic terms.* It would be unaccountable, did we not recollect that he was a Catholic who at that time was directing the Romish movement in Ireland, and that it was by the aid of the Romish members in the House that the feeble and tottering Administration was retained in power.[1]

[1] Lord Gosford's Despatches, Dec. 18, 1837; Ann. Reg. 1838, 11-13.

85. Commencement of the insurrection in Upper Canada. Nov. 29.

While these important events were occurring in Lower Canada, the upper province was also, though in a much lesser degree, the theatre of convulsion; and the confidence of Sir Francis Head in the loyalty of the inhabitants was put to the severest test. Although the vast majority of that province were firm in their attachment to Great Britain, and devoted in their loyalty to their sovereign, yet there were some malcontents, chiefly Irish, who, if unresisted, were in a situation, for a time at least, to do very considerable mischief. It has been already mentioned that Sir Francis had sent all the regular troops out of the province, and even declined the aid of some battalions of volunteers, who tendered their services to guard a depôt of six thousand arms at Toronto, its capital city. The result soon proved that this conduct, though bold, and in one view wise, was foolhardy.† No sooner was the intelligence of the rising in

* "Compare," says Papineau, "our present happy situation with that of our fathers. From the day on which the British dominion supervened, the reign of law succeeded to that of violence. From that day the treasures, the navy, and the army of Great Britain are mustered to afford us an invincible protection; from that day the better part of her laws became ours, while our religion, property, and the laws by which they are governed, remain unaltered."—PAPINEAU on the English Government, 1820; *Ann. Reg.* 1838, p. 49.

† "Considering the invasion with which we are still threatened, I conceived it to be absolutely my duty, by any means in my power, to lay before the American people the incontrovertible fact, that by the removal of her Majesty's troops, as also by the surrender of six thousand stand of arms to the civil authorities, the people of Upper Canada had virtually been granted an opportunity of revolting, and consequently, that as the British constitution had been protected solely by 'the sovereign will of the people,' it became, even by the greatest of all republican maxims, the only law of the land."—Sir FRANCIS HEAD'S Explanatory Memorandum to Lord GLENELG; *Parl. Paper*, 21st May 1838.

the lower province received in Toronto, than a proclamation appeared, headed "Provincial Convention," and signed by "W. L. Mackenzie," the editor of a Radical newspaper, summoning the Convention to meet there on the 21st December. This was soon followed by a proclamation, calling on the people at once to take up arms, and expel their tyrants.* Armed meetings were at the same time held in different parts of the province, in which the most violent and treasonable language was used; but still the Governor, relying on the loyalty of the people, and thinking that the danger should be met by moral, not physical strength, took no visible steps to avert it. At length, on the night of the 3d December, Mackenzie, at the head of five hundred rebels, advanced towards Toronto, and on the way murdered Colonel Moodie, a distinguished Loyalist, who was passing Montgomerie's Tavern, their headquarters, on horseback. "Blood," said Mackenzie, "has now been spilled; we are in for it, and have nothing left but to advance." [1]

[1] Sir F. Head to Lord Glenelg, Dec. 19, 1837; Ann. Reg. 1838, 14, 15.

86. Advance of the rebels. Dec. 4.

They advanced accordingly, and soon reached Toronto, where the Governor, according to his own admission, was "in bed and asleep." Roused by the intelligence of the rebels' approach, he hastily rose, and hurried to the town-hall, where the arms were deposited, to prepare for a sudden defence. The first man he met was the lord chief-justice of the province, with a musket on his shoulder. He was soon followed by a crowd of brave men, half dressed, and many of them unarmed, who hurried on the first alarm to what they knew would be the point of attack. Sir Francis hastily disposed these gallant men

* "Canadians! do you love freedom—do you wish for perpetual peace, and a government founded upon the eternal heaven-born principle of the Lord Jesus Christ? Then buckle on your armour, and put down the villains who oppress and enslave our country, in the name of that God who goes forth with the arms of His people, and whose Bible shows that it is with the same human means whereby you put to death thieves and murderers, that you must put down, in the strength of the Almighty, those governments which, like bad individuals, trample on the law, and destroy its usefulness. W. L. MACKENZIE."—*Ann. Reg.*, 1838, pp. 12, 13.

CHAP. XXX VII. 1837.

at the windows of the town-hall and adjoining houses; and scarcely had he done so, when the rebel column, headed by Mackenzie, approached. Seeing the windows occupied, however, by armed men, and being ignorant of their strength, the insurgents halted, and did not venture on an immediate attack. This hesitation, as is usually the case in such instances, proved fatal to the insurrection. In the interval, despatches were sent to COLONEL ALLAN M'NAB (now Sir Allan M'Nab, Bart.), who commanded the militia, to claim their support, and that intrepid man and his faithful followers made their appearance at daybreak. Three hundred armed men were soon assembled, which increased in the course of the day to five hundred; and the "fiery cross" was despatched to all the parishes and townships, which soon roused the whole of the inhabitants to arms. Meanwhile Mackenzie and his followers committed every species of enormity; with his own hands he robbed the mail, and set fire to Dr Horn's house.[1]

[1] Sir F. Head to Lord Glenelg, Dec. 19, 1838; Ann. Reg. 1839, 14, 15.

87. Their entire defeat. Dec. 7.

Finding that all attempts at an accommodation with the rebels were nugatory, as they demanded, as an indispensable preliminary, that a convention should be assembled, Sir Francis proceeded to reduce them to submission by force of arms. On the 7th, Colonel M'Nab marched out of Toronto, and attacked them in their position at Montgomerie's Tavern, whither they had retired, after the failure of their attempt to surprise the capital. The insurgents, being strongly posted in the Tavern and adjacent buildings, and all armed with rifles, made a stout resistance; but the militia and volunteers, headed by M'Nab, pushed forward with a vigour worthy of veteran troops, carried all their defences, and drove them out at the point of the bayonet. A total rout ensued. Mackenzie, in the utmost agitation, ran off, and reached Buffalo in New York in disguise; while the flag of the rebels, bearing the words "Bidwell and the glorious minority, 1837—a good beginning," fell into the hands

of the victors. Their triumph was complete: the insurgents were all dispersed; a great number of prisoners were taken, who were immediately released, and dismissed to their homes; and but for the efforts of the American "sympathisers" to rekindle the flames of civil war, the upper province was entirely tranquillised. This great success was achieved by the Loyalists without the loss of a single man.[1]

[1] Sir F. Head's Despatches, Dec. 19, 1837; Ann. Reg. 1838, 15, 16.

88. Glorious conduct of the militia in the upper province.

If the narrow escape which the Governor made from being surprised in the first outbreak of the insurrection, showed a want of due precaution in the beginning, the conduct of the Canadians in the upper province proved that he had not miscalculated in reckoning upon their loyalty and patriotism. No sooner was intelligence received, which it was with extraordinary rapidity, of Mackenzie's attack upon Toronto, than the militia everywhere flew to arms, and, setting out in the snow in the depth of a Canadian winter, marched with alacrity to the defence of the capital. From Niagara, Gore, Lake Simcoe, and many other places, brave men, armed and unarmed, rushed forward unsolicited to the theatre of conflict. The Scotch Highlanders from Glengarry evinced a spirit worthy of their descent; they mustered at once nine hundred strong when the news arrived, and had marched one hundred miles through the snow, every man carrying his arms and provisions, before they were stopped by advices of the suppression of the insurrection. The whole upper province was in motion and in arms. The excitement was universal and indescribable. So great was the concourse of armed men who hastened to the support of the government, that within three days ten thousand were assembled at Toronto and its vicinity, and Sir Francis was enabled to issue an order the day after Mackenzie's defeat, announcing that there was no further occasion for the resort of the militia to Toronto, and directing that of Bathurst, Johnston, Ottawa, and the eastern districts, to the lower province.[2] From this out-

[2] Head's Despatches, Dec. 19, 1838; Ann. Reg. 1838, 16, 17.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

burst of patriotic feeling, it is evident that, even if the rebels had succeeded in surprising and capturing the Governor and taking the arms, they would have been in the end defeated by the loyalty and public spirit of the province.

89. Efforts of the American sympathisers to invade Canada. Dec. 13.

The insurrection was now effectually suppressed, so far as it depended on its own resources. But it had extensive ramifications on the other side of the frontier; and the American "sympathisers," as they were called, mustered in great strength along the Niagara river. Handbills and proclamations were openly placarded in Buffalo, and all the towns of the United States adjoining Canada, in the name of the "Provisional Government," in which 100 dollars in silver and 300 acres of the finest land in Canada were offered to every one who might join the patriot forces; and it was stated that there would speedily be "10,000,000 acres of land fertile and fair at the disposal of the patriots, with the other vast resources of a country more extensive and rich in natural treasures than the United Kingdom or old France." The headquarters of these pirates were an island named Navy Island, in the Niagara river, about two miles above the Falls, and within the British territory. Of this island a body of 1500 Americans took possession on the 13th December, and they made it their chief depot of arms and provisions, and planted a gun on it, which began to cannonade the populous village of Chippewa on the British side, about 600 yards distant. They drew their chief supplies from the American shore by means of a small steamer called the Caroline, which plied between the island and opposite shore, and enabled the troops assembled there to maintain their ground in the advanced position within the British territory which they had gained. Among other military stores, she had brought them a piece of artillery, which was employed in cannonading Chippewa.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1838, 16, 17; Mart. ii. 383.

Having ascertained these facts, Col. M'Nab resolved

to destroy the piratical vessel engaged in this clandestine warfare. On the 28th December a party of militia was despatched from the British side to seize her. They found the vessel moored opposite Fort Schlosser on the American side, and strongly guarded by bodies of armed men both on board and on shore. Lieut. Drew led the boarding party, which, after a short but desperate conflict, carried the vessel, which was immediately set on fire after the prisoners had been taken out, and suffered to drift down the rapids to the Falls. It was swept down accordingly, and, still in flames, was precipitated over the terrific edge into the boiling cauldron beneath, where it was immediately dashed to pieces.[1]

90. Burning of the Caroline by Col. M'Nab. Dec. 28.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1838, 16, 17.

This bold act, which reflected equal honour on the judgment and courage of Col. M'Nab, was decisive of the present fate of the British North American provinces. Though perfectly warranted by the law of nations, seeing the Caroline had been engaged in piratical warfare against Great Britain, it made a very great impression in the United States, and immediately became the subject of the most unbounded exaggeration. It was said that an unprovoked attack had been made on an unarmed vessel in a state of profound peace, and a helpless crowd of women and children precipitated in flames over the cataract of Niagara, in the dead of night, by an armed British force. Immense was the sensation which this announcement produced, which was increased by a picture of the burning vessel going over the Falls, which was circulated from one end of the Union to the other, and thrilled every heart with horror. By degrees, however, the real state of the case made its way through the clouds of falsehood with which it had been environed; and the truth become manifest that the Caroline was attacked because she was a pirate employed in peace in prosecuting private warfare, and only sent over the Falls after all the crew had been taken out.[2] Seeing the British authorities thus determined, the President of the

91. These proceedings disclaimed by the American Government. Jan. 5, 1838.

Jan. 5, 1838.

[2] Ann. Reg. 1838; President's Proclamation, Jan. 5, 1838; Ibid. 317; Pub. Doc

CHAP. XXXVII. 1837.

United States issued a proclamation, admitting the piratical warfare of the sympathisers in Navy Island, and forbidding its continuance; and the American armed force in Navy Island, thus denounced by their own government, and learning they were about to be attacked by a body of British militia, evacuated it on the 14th of January.*

92. Reflections on this piratical warfare.

In this proclamation the President of the United States admitted, what was notoriously the fact, that the insurgents had obtained arms, ammunition, and other supplies within the territory of the United States. He might have added, what was not less the fact, that they were taken from the arsenals of the United States in presence of its civil officers, who were either unable or unwilling to prevent this covert and illegal warfare from going on. The governors of the frontier provinces issued proclamations against any interference, but did nothing *till the expedition had failed.* Then, and not till then, Van Ronselaer, who commanded the sympathisers, was held to bail, and the arms, guns, and ammunition which had been taken from the public arsenals were

* "Whereas, information having been received of a dangerous excitement on the northern frontier of the United States, in consequence of the civil war begun in Canada, and instructions having been given to the officers on that frontier, and application having been made to the government of the adjoining States to prevent any unlawful interference of our citizens in the contest unfortunately commenced in the British provinces, additional information has just been received that, notwithstanding the proclamation of the governors of the States of New York and Vermont, exhorting their citizens to refrain from any unlawful acts within the territory of the United States, and notwithstanding the presence of the civil officers of the United States, who by my directions have visited the scene of commotion with a view of impressing the citizens with a proper sense of their duty, the excitement, instead of being appeased, is every day increasing in degree; that arms and ammunition, and other supplies, have been obtained by the insurgents in the United States; that a military force, consisting, in part at least, of citizens of the United States, had been actually congregated at Navy Island, and were still in arms under a citizen of the United States, and that they were constantly receiving accessions and aid,—I, Martin Van Buren, President of the United States, do hereby warn all such persons as shall compromise the neutrality of this government by interfering in an unlawful manner with the affairs of the neighbouring British provinces, that they will render themselves liable to arrest and punishment under the laws of the United States. M. VAN BUREN, January 5, 1838." — *Ann. Reg.* 1838, p. 318 (Public Documents).

replaced in them. Upon this the pirates changed the scene of their operations. They collected in force at Detroit in Michigan, making demonstrations against the western end of Lake Ontario, while others menaced Kingston at the north-eastern end of the same lake. Feb. 25. Both parties, however, retired upon the approach of a body of British militia despatched to meet them. A more serious conflict soon after ensued with a body of Americans, who, after collecting at Sandusky Bay in the State of Ohio, took possession of Point Pile Island in Lake Erie, within the British territory. The troops and artillery despatched to dislodge them, under General Maitland, marched twenty miles over the ice, and took up such a position as obliged the Americans to fight. A severe conflict ensued, in which the invaders were utterly routed, not, however, without some loss on the part of the British, who had two killed and thirty wounded. This checked the incursions of the sympathisers, who did not again disturb the frontier till the insurrection a second time broke out in the following winter.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1838, 18, 19; Mart. ii. 381, 384.

93. Measures of Government in this emergency. Jan. 16.

Immense was the sensation which the intelligence of the outbreak in Canada produced in Great Britain. In the first moments of alarm all the disposable forces which could be collected, including a regiment of the Foot Guards, were sent out; and on this occasion the example was first afforded of a ship of the line carrying a battalion of the Guards, eight hundred strong, across the Atlantic. Parliament took the state of the colony into consideration on the 16th January, when Ministers introduced their remedial measures, which consisted in a suspension of the constitution of the colony, and the appointment of Lord Durham as Governor, with very ample powers for its future government and remodelling. Lord Gosford had resigned, and come home immediately after the rebellion was suppressed, leaving the interim direction of the province in the hands of the commander-in-chief, Sir John Colborne, to whom in such critical circumstances it seemed proper to intrust it. Sir Francis Head also, having dif-

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

fered with Government on some points of domestic policy, resigned his situation as governor of the upper province, and was succeeded by Sir George Arthur. Very animated debates on the subject took place in both houses of Parliament, in the course of which the Duke of Wellington made use of the celebrated expression "that a great nation cannot make a little war," and severely condemned Ministers for not having had a large military force in Canada when the rebellion, so long anticipated, broke out. Lord Durham declared that he accepted the onerous charge "with inexpressible reluctance," and that he felt "he could accomplish it only by the cordial and energetic support of his noble friends, the members of Her Majesty's Cabinet, by the co-operation of the Imperial Parliament, and the generous forbearance of the noble lords opposite, to whom he had been always politically opposed." [1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xl. 242-247.

94. Report of the committee of the Assembly on the wants of Canada. March 6, 1838.

The session of the legislature in Upper Canada was prorogued on the 6th March; but before it separated, a very able report was presented by the committee of the Assembly to the Governor, highly important, as indicating the wants of the sound and loyal portion of the population. This report recommended that all the British provinces in North America should be incorporated in a legislative union, "which would put them on a level with the most powerful nations," but that the local concerns should still be left as heretofore to the provincial parliaments; that the Queen should incorporate in her royal title the distinct claim of sovereignty over this portion of her dominions, and that their governor should be a nobleman of high rank, and bear the title of Viceroy; that Montreal should be incorporated with the upper province, as the present division left them without an independent outlet to the ocean; that representatives from the colonies of North America should have seats in *the House of Commons*, in the proportion of two for each of the two Canadas, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick respectively, and one each from Newfound-

land and Cape Breton — in all ten from the whole provinces of North America. The report concludes with a well-founded expression of satisfaction at the proof which recent events have afforded, how ardently the 600,000 inhabitants of Canada, of British origin, desire to continue subject to the British crown; and complains loudly of the "inefficiency imputed by a large class of the most intelligent of their fellow-subjects *to the colonial department in England*, owing to the frequent changes of the head of that department, and the incoherency of systems which such changes involve." English statesmen may well ponder over the contents of this temperate and able state-paper, every proposition of which subsequent events have proved to be well founded. Upon the adoption or rejection of these views, the retention of these magnificent colonies, as part of the dominions of Great Britain, is entirely dependent.[1]

[1] Report, March 6, 1838; Ann. Reg. 1838, 20, 21.

95. State of the Canadas when Lord Durham arrived.

The Government measures in regard to Canada were carried in the House of Commons by a majority of 246, the numbers being 262 to 16, and in the House of Lords without a division; and Lord Durham proceeded on his arduous mission. The voyage was long and unpropitious, and he did not land at Quebec till 29th May. He found difficulties of the most appalling kind awaiting him. No less than 161 prisoners were in custody awaiting their trial, although 326 had been liberated without any farther proceedings. Of these, seventy-two were charged as being the principal promoters of the insurrection. It was universally known that no convictions could be obtained against any of these from juries in Lower Canada, as the majority were generally French; and even where this was not the case, the English law, which required *unanimity*, precluded the hope of justice being ever administered by them in political cases. Aware of this obstacle, Sir John Colborne had delayed the trial of all the prisoners till the new Lord High Commissioner's arrival. The difficulty would have been avoided had martial law been at once proclaimed when the rising began; but unfortunately this

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

had not been done, from a desire to avoid proceeding to extreme measures; and the consequence was, that they could not now be tried except by the ordinary tribunals, without incurring the just reproach of accusing them under an *ex post facto* law. Such was the first difficulty which presented itself to Lord Durham on his arrival: a phalanx of prisoners awaiting their trial, a political necessity of bringing them to justice, and an absolute impossibility of doing this by the only legal means which the constitution left at his disposal. And of the reality of this last danger ample proof was afforded in the sequel; for a Frenchman named Chartrand having been murdered in cold blood by a party of the Canadian rebels, they were acquitted by the jury in the face of the clearest evidence, and of a decided charge for conviction by the chief justice who presided at the trial. The acquitted murderers and perjured jury were immediately feted throughout Lower Canada as the purest and most exalted patriots. With truth did Lord Durham say, in his despatch on the subject to Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Secretary, "In the present state of the province, trial by jury exists only to defeat the ends of justice, and provoke the righteous scorn and indignation of the community." [1]

[1] Lord Durham to Lord Glenelg, Sept. 28, 1838; Ann. Reg. 1838, 259-261.

96. Three courses open to Lord Durham, and which he chose.

In this distressing dilemma, one of three courses alone presented itself to the consideration of Lord Durham. The first was to go on with the treason trials in the ordinary way, with the *certainty* of the prisoners being all acquitted, and immediately paraded as flaming patriots through the province. The second was to try them under an *ex post facto* law, either before courts-martial, or a tribunal specially constituted without a jury, subject to all the animadversions which such a course of proceeding would justly excite. The third was to pack the juries by whom they were to be tried, and fill them only with British subjects; a course which would indeed secure their conviction, but would be open to the gravest reproaches, as a scandalous perversion of legal forms. It was a course, however, which might easily have been

adopted, as the powers vested in the sheriffs by whom the juries were summoned were so extensive and ill-defined that scarcely any check existed on their malversations; and it was the one which the prisoners most dreaded, from a very natural apprehension that Government would seek to counteract the undue partiality of juries on the one side, by a similar stretch of partiality on the other. The feelings of justice in the mind of the Lord High Commissioner, however, revolted against such a perversion of the forms of justice, though it was pressed upon him as the only practicable course by several of his leading councillors; and he preferred acceding to a petition presented to him by the leading political prisoners on 25th June, in which they offered, in order to avoid a trial, and in order to give, as far as in their power, tranquillity to the country, to place themselves at his lordship's discretion. In pursuance of this petition, an ordinance appeared on 28th June, the anniversary of the Queen's coronation, which declared that Wolfred Nelson, and seven other persons therein named, had acknowledged their participation in high treason, and had submitted themselves to her Majesty's pleasure; that Papineau, with fifteen others, had absconded; and enacted that it should be lawful for her Majesty to transport Nelson and his seven associates to Bermuda during pleasure, there to be subjected to such restraints as should be deemed fit; and that if any persons of the above classes should be found at large without permission, they should suffer death as traitors. Two other classes, implicated in the murder of Lieutenant Weir and Joseph Chartrand, were excepted from the general amnesty which, with the exceptions above mentioned, was proclaimed to all persons engaged in the late disturbances. The Gazette which contained this notification announced that the Governor and special council were actively engaged in the preparation of ordinances relative to jury-trial, bankrupt law, municipal institutions, general education, registry offices, and an equitable commutation of feudal services.[1]

June 25, 1838.

June 28, 1838.

[1] Ordinance, June 28, 1838; Ann. Reg. 1838, 304-307; Public Doc.

Excellent as this ordinance was in most respects, there

CHAP. XXXVII.

1838.

97. Mistake in the ordinance regarding the transportation of the prisoners.

was one particular in which, in point of form, it was unfortunately open to exception. It is a general principle of law, that the jurisdiction of any judge or public officer does not extend beyond the territory over which he presides, and that any sentence he may pronounce can only be carried into execution within that territory. For this reason, when the sentence of transportation in lieu of death or corporal pains was introduced into Great Britain, a special statute was passed in the reign of Queen Anne, authorising judges to pronounce such sentence, leaving it to the executive to carry it into execution, by ordering the removal of the convict beyond seas. No such statute had been passed in regard to the Canadas, and therefore the power of its judges and governors ceased when the limits of their jurisdiction were passed. When Lord Durham, therefore, pronounced sentence of banishment *to the Bermudas*, and detention therein at the Queen's pleasure, he obviously, in strict legal form, exceeded his powers. What he should have done, was to have sentenced them to imprisonment *in Canada*, till the Queen's pleasure in regard to their ultimate destination and disposal was taken, or simply banished them from Canada, which was, in the strictest sense, within his powers. But the error was one of form only, and was not only trivial, but it had proceeded from the very best motives. It spared the lives of the criminals, which had been justly forfeited to the offended laws of their country, removed them from the theatre of their machinations and their danger, and avoided the scandal, otherwise unavoidable, of either convicting the prisoners by means of a packed jury, or converting them into triumphant martyrs by the verdict of a perjured one. Nothing was easier than for the Government at home to have supplied what was wanting in legal form. All that was required was to have passed an Act, which could have been done in three days, confirming the ordinance as a measure of state necessity, and authorising the detention of the criminals in Bermuda

8 Anne.

or elsewhere, or commuting their sentences into simple banishment from the whole British provinces of North America. The reasons for sustaining the ordinances were explained by Lord Durham, in a despatch to Lord Glenelg on the subject, in the clearest terms, and they are so convincing as must ever command the assent of every unprejudiced mind.*

98. Difficulty when the prisoners arrived in Bermuda. July 15.

The technical difficulty regarding the detention of the prisoners beyond the limits of Canada, does not seem to have occurred either to Lord Durham or any of his councillors, none of whom were lawyers, and with whom the desire to get quit of the prisoners was very naturally paramount to every other consideration. But though this was a most pressing object with those who were sending the prisoners away, it was not equally urgent with those who were to receive them; and accordingly, Sir Stephen Chapman, the Governor of Bermuda, felt not a little embarrassed as to the course which he should pursue when they arrived there, which they did in the middle of July. After consultation with the law-officers of the Crown in that island, it was determined that there was no legal ground on which they could be kept in detention; and to solve the difficulty, they were merely put on their parole not to leave the island.[1] At the same

[1] Sir Stephen Chapman to Lord Durham, July 17, 1838; Ann. Reg. 1838, 257, 258.

* "These measures have met with the entire approbation of Sir John Colborne and the heads of what is called the British party; they declared they did not require any sanguinary punishment, but they desired *security for the future*, and the certainty that the returning tranquillity of the province should not be arrested by the machinations of these ringleaders of the rebellion, either here or in the United States. This I have effected for them to their contentment. I did not think it right to transport these persons to a convict colony, for two reasons: first, because it was affixing a character of moral infamy on their acts which public opinion would not sanction; and secondly, because I hold it would be impolitic to force on the colony itself persons who would be looked upon in the light of political martyrs, and thus acquire, perhaps, a degree of influence, which might be applied to evil uses in a community composed of such dangerous elements. On consultation, therefore, with Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Paget, I determined on sending them to Bermuda, where they would be placed under strict surveillance. There is, however, little fear of their attempting to escape, as such an act would close at once, and for ever, the door against their re-entering their native country."—LORD DURHAM to LORD GLENELG, 29th June 1838; *Parl. Papers.*

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

time, urgent despatches were sent off to the Government at home, requesting instructions how to act in the embarrassing circumstances which had arisen.

99. Lord Glenelg proves unequal to the crisis.

Unfortunately, the nobleman at the head of the colonial department of Great Britain at this time was by no means equal to the crisis which had arisen. Lord Glenelg, formerly Mr Charles Grant, was a man of talents and amiable character, but he was destitute of all the great and commanding qualities of a statesman. Born of a family of sincere but perhaps ultra-religious convictions, he saw everything, if the expression may be used, through a concientious medium. He made no allowance for the difference of men from race, circumstances, or political institutions, but applied the same undeviating rule of right and wrong to the half-civilised backwoodsman or the savage Caffre, which he would have done to the sturdy Presbyterian or the zealous Episcopalian. This principle is right in the main, for morality, individual or political, is of universal obligation; but it requires in practice to be largely modified in its application to different places, and some of the greatest calamities recorded in history have arisen from its unbending enforcement. A melancholy example of this will occur in the sequel, in the case of the Caffre war.

100. State of parties, and weakness of Government when the intelligence arrived.

In addition to the peril arising to Lord Durham and the Canadas from the rigid and over-strict principles of the Colonial Minister, there was an additional danger of the most formidable kind, owing to the state of parties at the time when intelligence of the insurrection arrived in Great Britain. The Government, which, since its reconstruction under Lord Melbourne, had never been sure of a majority in the House of Peers, had only one of twenty or thirty, almost entirely composed of Irish Catholics, in the Commons. In these circumstances, it was perilous in the extreme to take a decided line in regard to an insurrection which excited the sympathy of the Romish party, so strongly as that of the French

habitans of Lower Canada had done. The Tories, exasperated by the loss of office, and the retention of it by their opponents when they could only command so small a majority, eagerly laid hold of any slip in administration to drive Ministers into a minority, and compel them to resign. Lord Brougham, who had never forgiven his former colleagues the reconstruction of the Cabinet, on Sir R. Peel's resignation, without his forming part of it, signalised himself by the extreme bitterness with which he headed the onslaught. Lord Durham, in the hour of his need, was far from experiencing either "the cordial and sincere support of his noble friends in the Cabinet," or the "generous forbearance of the noble lords opposite," on which he had relied when he set out on his arduous mission. The result was, that, after protracted debates in both houses of Parliament, which occupied the whole of summer, and fill up nearly five hundred pages of the Parliamentary Debates, the ordinance was annulled by Act of Parliament, and a bill was passed declaring an indemnity for the consequence of their now declared illegal acts. The majority in the Commons on this subject was so large that the Opposition in that house did not venture on a division; in the Lords it was 54 to 36.[1]

Aug. 7, 1838. [1] Parl. Deb. xl. 1039; Ann. Reg. 1838, 259, 281.

"I cannot but say," said Lord Melbourne, in communicating the resolution of Government to disavow the ordinance to the House of Peers, "that it is with the deepest alarm and regret that I have taken this course. Nor is it without very great apprehension of the consequence that I have come to this determination." The result soon proved that these anticipations were well founded, and that Government on this occasion had acted a timid and selfish, rather than a wise and magnanimous part. Lord Durham first received, *through American newspapers*, intelligence of the disavowal of the ordinance, and the proceedings of the House of Lords on the evenings of the 7th, 9th, and 10th of August, when the subject was finally discussed. Feeling that his weight and usefulness as Governor-general

101. Lord Durham resigns.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

were at an end, by this decisive censure of his conduct in the most important particular, he immediately took the resolution to resign, which he communicated forthwith to the Cabinet, accompanied with a long explanatory memoir on his own conduct. His resignation was accepted, and Mr Poulett Thomson, afterwards Lord Sydenham, was appointed his successor. It is impossible to doubt that in doing so Lord Durham acted a dignified and appropriate part; but it is impossible to bestow a similar meed of praise on a proclamation which he published on the occasion, in which he openly announced to the Bermuda exiles, that as a general amnesty had been proclaimed by his authority under certain exceptions, and the exceptions had been disallowed by Government, there was no impediment to their immediate return to Canada, which accordingly took place. There could be no doubt that this view of the result of the timid policy of Government was well founded, though the policy of the ex-governor himself announcing it to his rebellious subjects was not equally apparent.[1] *

Oct. 9, 1838.

[1] Mart. ii. 389, 390; Ann. Reg. 319-322.

102. His valuable report on Canada.

But although Lord Durham retired from his command, he left his mantle to his successor. During the brief period—little exceeding four months—that he had held office, he had collected with extraordinary diligence and great ability a vast mass of valuable information regarding both the Canadas and the whole British provinces of North America, which was digested in a long report replete with the most important suggestions regarding those splendid portions of the British dominions. He ascribes the chief evils in Lower Canada to the animosity of the British and French races, which no period of existence

* "The proclamation contained an entire amnesty, qualified only by the exceptions specified in the ordinance. The ordinance has been disallowed, and the proclamation is confirmed. Her Majesty having been advised to refuse her assent to the exceptions, the amnesty exists without qualification. No impediment, therefore, exists to the return of the persons who have made the most distinct admission of guilt, or have been excluded by me from the province on account of the danger to which it would be exposed by their presence."—Proclamation, October 9, 1838; *Ann. Reg.*, 1838, p. 322, note.

under the same government has been able to extinguish. This animosity at that period was carried so far, that they not only had scarcely any social intercourse, but each race had its separate steamboats, banks, and hotels. The English were ultra-English, the French ultra-French, and every question, whatever it arose from, ere long ran into one or other of these exclusive channels. The representative system, also, was little better than a solemn mockery, the representatives being shorn of all real authority except in local and comparatively immaterial concerns, and the forms of a responsible being combined with the reality of an irresponsible government. As a consequence of this want of effective popular control, government and its patronage and resources were farmed out for the benefit of a certain number of families or ruling districts, and the great bulk of the community excluded from all participation in them. Great abuses also existed in the administration of justice; and beyond the walls of Quebec; all regular conduct either of the law or of public affairs was almost unknown. As a remedy for these evils, he suggested a great variety of remedies, the principal of which was the union of the two provinces in one united Assembly, and a great extension of the power of the local legislature, so as to realise the favourite colonial wish of real responsible government.[1]

[1] Lord Durham's Report on Canada, 1838.

103. Fresh breaking-out of the rebellion. Nov. 3.

Scarcely had Lord Durham quitted the capital of Canada, which he did on the 1st November, when the ruinous effect of the timid policy of the British Government in not supporting his ordinances became apparent. The Bermuda prisoners had all returned, and instead of evincing either the smallest contrition for the treasons of which they had been guilty, or the least gratitude for the extraordinary lenity with which they had been treated, they set themselves at work immediately to organise a fresh insurrection. It had been originally intended that it should have broken out on the very night of his departure, but numerous arrests took place at Montreal on

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

that evening, which prevented the explosion till the 3d, when the *habitans* were once more in arms against the British Crown. The insurrection began with an attack of four hundred men on the house of Mr Ellice, a great proprietor in Lower Canada, who was made prisoner, and carried off as a hostage. On the same day, a body of armed men secreted themselves in the neighbourhood of Laughnawaga, an Indian village, the inhabitants of which had recently been converted to Christianity. Information having been brought to the Indians, who were at church, they instantly raised the war-whoop, and falling on the rebels, who made scarce any resistance, took seventy prisoners, and dispersed the whole party.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1838, 330; Mart. ii. 391.

104. Actions with the insurgents, and their defeat. Nov. 9.

Sir John Colborne, who on the departure of Lord Durham had resumed the interim command of the province, acted with the vigour and decision which in the outset of civil troubles is the general harbinger of success; and the military force at his disposal had been so considerably augmented, that he was enabled to carry on operations with promptitude. Having received intelligence that between the 3d and 6th November four thousand insurgents had assembled at Napierville in La Prairie, under the command of Wolfred Nelson, Dr Cote, and Eagnon, all three returned Bermuda prisoners, he directed Sir James Macdonnell and General Clitheron, with the Guards and a body of infantry, to move against them; but owing to the badness of the roads they did not arrive there before the 10th, when they found the whole body had dispersed. The leaders, before doing so, had issued a proclamation containing a declaration of independence, a republican form of government, the confiscation of the crown-lands and clergy reserves, the abolition of imprisonment for debt and of the feudal services, and the institution of a register for mortgages. The insurgents, being in close union with the American sympathisers, detached a force to open a communication with them in the neighbourhood of Odell, on

CHAP. XXXVII.

the Richelieu. But this force on its march fell in with a body of loyalist volunteers, by whom they were totally routed, with the loss of a field-piece and three hundred stand of arms. The same body of Loyalists, on the 9th, fell in with the insurgents, greatly superior in number, who were retreating from Napierville. They threw themselves into the church of Odell, and awaited the attack of the rebels. They were not long of commencing the assault, which they deemed sure of success; but such was the gallantry of the volunteers and the steadiness of their defence, that the assailants were repulsed with the loss of fifty killed and twice that number wounded. These successes so damped the spirits of the insurgents that the rebellion entirely ceased in Lower Canada, where it had been almost entirely suppressed by the energy and spirit of the loyalist volunteers, with very little assistance from the regular troops. On the other hand, it deserves to be recorded to the credit of the insurgents, that although they were at first twelve thousand strong, and had Mr Ellice and nearly an hundred Loyalists in their hands for several days, no deeds of cruelty were exercised towards them, and their captors even showed them the shortest way to rejoin their friends on the suppression of the insurrection.[1]

1838. Nov. 9.

[1] Sir John Colborne's Despatches, Dec. 12, 1838; London Gazette.

105. Defeat of the American invaders. Nov. 12 and 13.

The rebellion would never have extended on this occasion to Upper Canada had it not been for the efforts of the American sympathisers, who made the most vigorous efforts to instigate and support it in that quarter. On the evening of November 12, a body of five hundred Americans with several field-pieces crossed the St Lawrence at Prescott, and effected a landing on the British territory. They were there quickly attacked by three armed steamers, and a small body of regulars and militia under the command of Captain Landon, R.N., and Colonel Young. After a brief combat the invaders gave way, and retired to a stone building, from which they kept up so vigorous a fire, especially with their field-pieces, that the

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

British, who had no artillery, were unable to dislodge them. They took positions, however, which prevented their escape, while the war-steamers effectually cut off their communication with the American shore. Meanwhile despatches were sent off for succour, and ere long four companies of the 83d, with two guns and a howitzer, arrived under Colonel Dundas, which were soon followed by a company of the 93d Highlanders. The investment of the building was now made closer, and the artillery opened a fire at four hundred yards upon its outer walls. Before a practicable breach could be effected, however, the enemy evacuated the position, and were taken prisoners in endeavouring to effect their escape. The loss of the British in this warm affair was forty-five killed and wounded; but they took three guns from the enemy, besides sixteen wounded, and a hundred and fifty-nine prisoners were taken and sent off to Kingston, to be tried before courts-martial; of these no less than an hundred and thirty-one were natives of the United States.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1838.

106. Fresh rout of the Americans at Sandwich. Dec. 12.

This rude repulse for some time checked the incursions of these lawless marauders; but the Americans were too much set upon Canadian insurrection and spoliation to abandon their designs without further efforts. On December 4, at daybreak, a fresh body of four hundred men landed at Sandwich, at the western extremity of Upper Canada, burned a steamboat, set fire to the barracks, in which two men perished, and inhumanly murdered Dr Hume, a military surgeon, who accidentally fell into their hands from mistaking them for a body of provincial militia. These atrocities so roused the indignation of the Canadians, that when the militia under Colonel Prime came up and attacked the invaders, twenty-six of their number was slain, and only twenty-five prisoners taken. The remainder fled, with scarcely any resistance, across the frontier, and this terminated the hostilities on the frontier of Upper Canada.[2]

[2] Ann. Reg. 1838, 331, 332.

But although the war on the field had terminated, that

on the scaffold was to commence, and many brave men were to expiate by their lives the immense fault of the British Government in annulling the wise and humane ordinances of Lord Durham on occasion of the first insurrection. The number of prisoners taken and awaiting their trial in the prisons both of Montreal and Toronto was very great, and their disposal occasioned no small embarrassment to Government. No less than 753 were confined in the jail of the former of these places. Of these 164 were discharged at once; and of the whole remainder only twelve were brought to trial, all of French birth or extraction. Of these, two were acquitted by the court-martial before which they were arraigned, and the remainder were sentenced to death. Two only were executed, Cardinal and Duquette, the former a notary, the latter a tavern-keeper, who had been prominent instigators of the insurrection. The other convicts were sentenced to various periods of transportation or imprisonment. It must ever be considered as in the highest degree honourable to the British Government, that two formidable insurrections, in so important a part of its dominions, were suppressed with so small a sacrifice of life—a striking contrast to the streams of noble blood which a century before had streamed on the scaffold in Scotland on occasion of the Highland rebellion, and warranting the hope that in process of time this barbarous infliction, in political cases, will entirely disappear before the growing influence of humanity.[1]

107. State trials after the suppression of the insurrection.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1838, 333, 334; Mart. ii. 392.

A more delicate and perilous task awaited the Government in the disposal of the American prisoners taken at Prescott, for there political and national passions of the most violent kind interfered on both sides. On the one hand, the Canadian Loyalists insisted that the renewal of the insurrection and the invasion had been entirely owing to the mistaken and ill-deserved lenity which had been shown to the insurgents on occasion of the first outbreak,

108. Execution of the leading American sympathisers.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

and that there could be no security for the British provinces till the law was allowed to take its course against these repeated and incorrigible offenders. On the other hand, the excitement in the United States on account of the Canadian sympathisers was so strong, that there was the greatest danger that, if the punishment of death was inflicted on any considerable number of the invaders, it might become too strong for the Government, and precipitate the two countries into a ruinous war, despite the utmost efforts of the rulers on both sides to prevent it. In these difficult circumstances, the conduct of the executive on the British side was so firm as to command respect, and at the same time so moderate as not to excite animosity. A court-martial assembled at Kingston on the 24th November, before which Von Schoultz, a Pole, the commander of the Prescott invasion, and three of his associates, Abbey, George, and Woodruff, were tried, condemned, and executed. They met their fate with unpretending fortitude, only complaining of the deception which had been practised upon them in regard to the nature of the enterprise on which they were to be engaged, and the amount of support they were likely to meet with. Their death was followed by that of five others, three of whom had been concerned in the piratical and barbarous inroad at Sandwich. This closed the melancholy list of capital convictions for these outrages, though a great number of others were sentenced to various penalties of lesser degree.* The Government of

* Persons convicted of Treason or Political Felony in Upper Canada, from 1st October 1837 to 1st November 1838.

Pardoned on giving security,	140
Sentenced to confinement in penitentiary,	14
Sentenced to banishment,	18
Sentenced to transportation to Van Diemen's Land,	27
Escaped from Fort Henry,	12
Escaped from Cape Diamond,	1
Tried by court-martial,	1
Tried from Toronto hospital,	1
Sentenced to death,	1

—*Ann. Reg.* 1838, p. 336.

the United States interfered on humane grounds, but made no *casus belli* on account of these executions, though one of the sufferers was a colonel in their militia; on the contrary, they always held out to the British Cabinet that the piratical irruptions were done against their wishes and without their consent, and that, so far from favouring the views of the sympathisers, they considered the union of the Canadas to their States as likely to prove prejudicial to their best interests.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1838, 334, 335, 336; Mart. ii. 392.

109. Reflections on this subject.

There is no reason to doubt that this statement on the part of the American Government was sincere; but it is not the less true that the system which it has often permitted its people to pursue, in this particular, is in the highest degree dangerous and unjust. It is no answer to the complaints of a neighbouring people that their territory has been invaded, their subjects slaughtered, and their towns burned, by the pirates of an adjoining state, to say that it was all done without the knowledge or consent of their Government, that their artillery has been violently taken out of their arsenals by armed mobs, and that the national forces were inadequate to prevent their pillage, and the misappropriation of their resources to foreign aggression. No government is entitled in this manner to abdicate its functions, and shelter itself under alleged neutrality, so far as itself is concerned, when it permits its subjects to engage, without efficient check, in piratical incursions against its neighbours, often of the most dangerous character. If it pleads in extenuation that it is too weak to prevent such outrages, it affixes the darkest stigma upon the character of institutions which fail in discharging the first duty of government, that of preventing private warfare. The English historian need not fear incurring the imputation of undue national prejudice in making these observations, for he must confess with a blush, that it was his own country which began this iniquitous system, and that the American sympathisers only applied to the British dominions that species of

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

covert hostility which their Government had sanctioned in regard to the Spanish colonies of South America, and recently introduced, with such ruinous consequences, into the European dominions of old Spain.

110. Great change in the institutions of British North America.

These decisive successes on the part of the British Government closed both the gulf of rebellion in the two Canadas, and the dangerous hostility on the American frontier. It was followed, however, by consequences the very reverse of what had been expected by both parties in that unhappy contest. The Loyalists anticipated the entire subjection of the colonies to British rule, now that their opponents had been so completely defeated. The *habitans* and their revolutionary leaders dreaded the establishment of a military government by the victors, which should abrogate their liberties, and extinguish both their nationality and peculiar laws. The result was entirely different from what either party had prognosticated. Lord Durham's report and recommendations were carried into full effect by his successors, though he himself fell a victim to the timidity of Government and the virulence of faction at home. In that valuable document he had signalised, as next to the division of races which embittered everything in Lower Canada, the existence of a "family compact," which had caused all the patronage and benefits of Government to flow in a peculiar and restricted channel in the upper province. In his report he strongly urged the adoption of a more liberal and catholic policy, which should take away the latter ground of complaint, and the union of the two provinces in one legislature, which might ultimately remove the asperity of the former. Both suggestions were adopted and carried into effect by his successor, Lord Sydenham. After a considerable delay, but not longer than was required to mature the details of so great an innovation, the new constitution was proclaimed in Canada, a united legislature established, with a local government really, not merely in name, subjected to public control.[1] The conse-

Feb. 10, 1841.

[1] Mart. ii. 393, 394; Lord Sydenham's Life, 210.

quences of this change have been strange and unexpected, but on the whole eminently beneficial both to the colonies and the mother country.

111. Effect of this upon the local Canadian government.

The first effect was a change which the Loyalists were far from expecting, and which gave them, it must be confessed, a most reasonable ground of complaint. When the two provinces were united in one house, it was found, contrary to what had been generally anticipated, that the Liberals and French party had a majority in the Assembly. The consequence of course was, that the rule of the "family compact" in the upper province came to an end, and that the ministry were taken from the party which had the majority in the legislature. Though this was entirely in accordance with the principles of representative government, yet it excited at first the most violent heats and animosities in the British party. They complained that Papineau and the leaders of the insurrection had been elevated to power, and enjoyed all the sweets of government, while they, who had imperilled their lives and fortunes to maintain the British supremacy and connection, were excluded from all share in the administration of the country they had saved. There can be no question that there was both reason and justice in these complaints; and after the violent collision which had taken place, and the glorious spirit they had evinced, they were peculiarly natural in Colonel M'Nab and the Conservative leaders. Nevertheless it does not appear that any other course could have been pursued by a government subject to the real control of a popular assembly; and if experience, the true test of wisdom in a course of government, is referred to, the result seems to establish in the most triumphant manner the wisdom of the course which has been pursued.

The rebellion, as might have been expected, threw a grievous damp for a season over the fortunes of Canada; the imports from England, and emigrants from that country, exhibited a striking falling-off in the years 1838

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

112. Vast growth of Canada since 1841.

and 1839.* But from the time when the government appeared to be firmly established, and the legislature of the two provinces was united in one Assembly, with a ministry subject to effective public control, the Canadas took a start, not only beyond anything recorded in their history, but perhaps unexampled, in the absence of gold or silver mines, in the history of the world. During the ten years from 1841 to 1851, the free population of the United States increased 37 per cent, the slave 27 per cent; and this certainly was a sufficiently large increase for a country numbering, at the commencement of the period, nearly seventeen millions of inhabitants. But it was trifling in comparison of the growth of the two Canadas during the same years, the population of which, chiefly in consequence of immigration from the British Islands, increased no less than 59 per cent, while the increase of the upper province was 104 per cent.† In 1834, the exports to Canada were £1,018,000, her imports £1,063,000; while in 1854 her exports and imports, taken together, were £13,945,000, of which £4,622,000 was composed of imports from Great Britain. So rapid and sustained a growth, in so short a period, is perhaps unexampled in the history of the world.‡ Not less re-

		To all the world.
* Emigrants to Canada in 1836,	27,456	75,417
„ „ 1837,	28,392	72,024
„ „ 1838,	3,452	33,222

—*Parl Papers*, 1836-7-8.

† Free population of the United States in 1840,	14,582,102
„ „ „ 1850,	20,089,909
Increase, 37.77 per cent.	
Slave population of the United States in 1840,	2,487,358
„ „ „ 1850,	3,179,587
Increase, 27.81 per cent.	
Total population of Canada in 1841,	1,156,139
„ „ „ 1851,	1,842,265
Increase, 59.34 per cent.	
Population of Upper Canada in 1841,	465,357
„ „ „ 1851,	952,004

—*Prospects of Canada*, 1854, pp. 66, 67.

‡ "No nation or community, with the solitary exception of Victoria, can boast of such extensive progress as Canada; but there is this important difference in the two colonies, that the sudden rise of the Australian colony was almost solely attributable to the rush which was made for the recently

markable has been the increase in the agricultural produce of the province, which, in Upper Canada, has quadrupled in ten years preceding 1851, while its shipping has doubled during the same period; and the consumption of British manufactures since 1852, when the gold discoveries came into play, is, on an average, £2, 6s. a-head for each inhabitant,* being more than double of

discovered gold. In 1834, Canada imported goods to the amount of only £1,063,000, and exported in return produce and manufactures of her own soil to the amount of £1,018,000; but in 1854 the value of her exports and imports was not less than £13,945,000. If we analyse these figures, it will be found that the mother country supplied Canada with her manufactures to the amount of £4,622,000, the United States sent her £2,945,000, foreign countries £268,507, and the adjoining British North American colonies, £159,000. Every person in Canada consumed on an average the produce of foreign countries to the amount of £3, 14s. 10d., while in the adjoining States the average consumption reached only £2, 7s. per head. The nature of the Canadian trade with foreign countries may be judged of by the following facts: The produce of the forests of the colony—the vast timber trade which was expected—was of the value of £2,355,000; of vegetable food, principally corn and flour, £1,995,099; animal produce, £342,631; fish, £85,000; manufactures, £35,106; various agricultural products, £26,618; ships, £520,187. The total exports, if divided among the population, would give an average of £2, 15s. to each individual, or 8s. more than is the case in the United States. The entire value of the British exports of the United States was £23,461,000, or about £1 per head of the population; while the consumption of British goods by the Canadians was at the rate of £2, 6s. 7d. per head."—*Canadian News*, Aug. 24, 1856.

The progress of this astonishing trade has been as follows during the last seven years:—

Years.	Imports.	Exports.	Revenue.	Expenditure.
1847	£3,966,570	£2,203,054	£416,569	£376,456
1848	2,629,584	2,302,830	312,037	389,992
1849	2,468,130	2,193,678	421,998	370,613
1850	3,489,466	2,457,886	578,822	437,312
1851	4,404,409	2,663,983	692,206	521,643
1852	4,168,457	2,883,213	723,724	535,171
1853	6,571,527	4,523,060	982,334	611,667

—Lord ELGIN'S *Report*, Quebec, 18th December 1854.

	1841. Bushels.	1847. Bushels.	1851. Bushels.
* Wheat crop, Upper Canada,	3,321,991	7,558,773	12,692,892
„ Lower Canada,	942,835	2,172,149	3,675,868
	4,262,826	9,730,922	15,778,760

	Value.	Population.	
British imports to Canada in 1854,	£2,475,643	1,842,265 or	£1, 6s. per head.
„ to United States,	1,874,211	23,246,301 or	13s. „

Shipping built at Quebec in 1843, 13,785 tons; 1851, 41,505 tons.

—Lord ELGIN'S *Despatch*, 22d December 1852.

CHAP. XXXVII.

1838.

what it is in the United States, where it is only £1, 2s. per head.

113. Reflections on this wonderful increase.

Many causes have doubtless contributed to produce this astonishing increase of material prosperity and inhabitants in Canada, during the period which has elapsed since the union of the provinces and the establishment of popular and responsible government in 1841; and it would be unreasonable to ascribe it entirely to any one of them. Among these, a prominent place must be assigned to the establishment of free trade in Great Britain in 1846; the immense emigration from these islands in the five years immediately preceding 1853, a large part of which went to Canada, and contributed essentially to the growth of the province; and the gold discoveries in California and Australia, which, since 1852, have added 50 per cent to the value of its produce,—exports and imports.* But giving full effect to the influence of these causes, which without doubt were the main-spring of Canadian prosperity, it seems, at the same time, not unreasonable to conclude that much also is to be ascribed to the establishment, in 1841, of a form of government essentially democratic, and therefore suited to the circumstances of the country, and calculated to soften down, and at length extinguish, its unhappy rivalry of races. There is much truth in the observation of Lord Elgin, whose liberal and enlightened administration has done so much to heal the divisions, and permit the expansion of the material resources of the province, that "in a society singularly democratic in its structure, where diversities of race supplied special elements of confusion, and where, consequently, it was most important that constituted

* Emigrants who arrived at Quebec, from 1847 to 1854.

1847, . .	90,150	1852, . .	39,176
1848, . .	27,939	1853, . .	36,699
1849, . .	38,494	1854, . .	54,112
1850, . .	32,292		
1851, . .	41,076	In eight years,	360,238

Besides a large number who landed at New York, and found their way across the frontier into the Canadian provinces.—Lord Elgin's *Report*, December 18, 1854.

authority should be respected, the moral influence of government was enfeebled by the existence of perpetual strife between the powers that ought to have afforded each other mutual support. No state of affairs could be imagined less favourable to the extinction of national animosities, and to the firm establishment of the gentle and benignant control of those liberal institutions which it is England's pride and privilege to bestow upon her children." [1]

[1] Lord Elgin's Despatch, Dec. 1854, § 66.

114. Adaptation of democracy to new colonies.

But in truth there is more in the case than even these eloquent words convey; and it may with safety be affirmed, not only that a popular form of government is the one best adapted to rising colonial settlements, but that it is the one indispensable to their growth and prosperity. There is no example in the history of mankind of a despotic government having formed real colonies, or of those offshoots of civilisation ever attaining a robust growth but under practically republican institutions. The colonies of Greece and Rome were as numerous and prosperous in ancient times, as those of Great Britain and Holland have been in modern; but colonisation died away under the imperial sceptre; it has never proceeded from the despotisms of the East; and though France and Spain have made brilliant colonial *conquests*, they have never founded real colonies. The reason is, that the warfare of man in infant colonies is with the desert or the forest, not with the property or influence of his neighbours, which is what in after times renders a strong and real government indispensable. The energy and independence which make him penetrate the woods, render him confident in himself and impatient of the control of others; the submission and contentment which are essential to the peace of aged society, are fatal to its commencement in those solitary regions. Self-government is the want of man in such circumstances, because isolation is his destiny, and plenty his accompaniment. The government of others becomes necessary in later times, because he is surrounded

CHAP. XXXVII.

1838.

by numbers, and the abundance of rude has been succeeded by the privations of civilised life.

115. Recent growth of this prosperity, and opposite condition of the United States.

It is the more evident that the popular government, which has succeeded the rebellions and union of the provinces in Canada, has been eminently favourable to the development of its energies and resources, that its present extraordinary prosperity is of recent growth, and has chiefly arisen *since* its establishment. Twenty years ago the case was just the reverse; and the backward condition and neglected natural riches of Canada presented a strange and mortifying contrast to the opposite condition of the adjoining provinces of the United States, which attracted the notice of every traveller. "The superiority of the condition of our republican neighbours," said Lord Durham in 1838, "is perceivable throughout the whole extent of our North American territory. Even the ancient city of Montreal will not bear a comparison with Buffalo, a creation of yesterday. There is but one railroad in all British North America—that between Lake Champlain and the St Lawrence—and it is *only fifteen miles long.* The people on the frontier are poor and scattered, separated by vast forests, without towns or markets, and almost destitute of roads, living in mean houses, and without apparent means of improving their condition. On the American side, on the other hand, all is activity and bustle. The forest has been widely cleared; every year numerous settlements are formed, and thousands of farms created out of the waste. The country is intersected by common roads; canals and railroads are finished, or in course of formation. The observer is surprised at the number of harbours on the lakes, and the multitude of vessels they contain; while bridges, artificial landing-places, and commodious wharves, are formed in all directions as soon as required. Good houses, mills, inns, warehouses, villages, towns, and even great cities, are almost seen to spring out of the desert. Every village has its school-house and place of public worship; every

town has many of both, with its township buildings, book-stores, and probably one or two banks and newspapers; and the cities, with their fine churches, great hotels, great exchanges, court-houses, and municipal halls of stone and marble, so new and fresh as to mark the recent existence of the forest where they now stand, would be admired in any part of the world."[1]

[1] Lord Durham's Report; Ann. Reg. 1838, 341.

116. Opposite state of the British provinces at this time.

What a contrast does this graphic description present to the present condition of the British provinces of North America! The picture drawn in 1838 by Lord Durham of the American shore, might pass for a faithful portrait of the British at present. Individual enterprise has been fostered by public encouragement; magnificent undertakings by Government have formed the arteries of prosperity through the State; and the forest has, in an incredibly short space of time, under the influence of such stimulants, yielded its virgin riches to the efforts of laborious man. Where, twenty years ago, only one railway, fifteen miles long, existed, *thirteen millions* of British capital have now been expended on railway communication; a vast system of internal lines renders commerce alike independent of the obstacles of nature and the hostility of man; and a gigantic bridge, rivalling the greatest works of antiquity, is about to attract all future generations to the romantic shores of the St Lawrence. Nor have these generous aids from the Government and riches of the mother country been thrown away upon an ungrateful people. Political divisions have in a great measure ceased in that prosperous land; even the rancour of religious hostility has been, comparatively speaking, appeased; loyalty to the British throne, attachment to the British connection, have become universal. During the darkest periods of the Russian war, the Canadians stood faithfully by our side; they subscribed generously to the Patriotic Fund, intended to alleviate the distresses with which it was accompanied; they offered battalions of volunteers to share our dangers, and the fall of Sebastopol was cele-

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

brated with greater enthusiasm in Quebec and Montreal than either in London or Dublin. These unequivocal proofs of undiminished loyalty in this noble portion of the British people, encourages the pleasing hope that the bonds which unite them to the mother country may be long, very long of being severed; that the advantages of real self-government may, in their case, be united with the chivalrous feelings of attachment to the throne; that mutual benefit may perpetuate an union commenced from a sense of mutual dependence; and that, when at length it comes, as come it will, from the greatness of the younger State, to be dissolved, it may not be violently severed, but insensibly wear away, like the sway of parental authority in an united family, and melt INTO A PERPETUAL AND INDISSOLUBLE ALLIANCE.*

* It is painful to be obliged to add that the statesman to whose wisdom and firmness, more than that of any other single individual in existence, this marvellous progress is to be ascribed, and whose suggestions were all embodied in the constitution and union of the provinces which have finally given peace to Canada, fell a victim to the efforts he had made on behalf of his country. To remarkable talents, which his report on Canada unequivocally demonstrates, Lord Durham united the magnanimity and lofty spirit which form an essential part in the heroic character. Unfortunately he possessed also the love of approbation and sensitiveness to blame which are the predominant features in the female disposition. He was impatient of contradiction, and irritable when thwarted; and those failings, which in ordinary life would scarcely have been observed, proved fatal to him on the stormy eminence on which he was ultimately placed. His mortification at the disallowance of his ordinances was extreme, and it preyed upon a constitution naturally weak, to such a degree as to bring him to an untimely grave. He was busily engaged with his official duties to the very last, and the night before his departure he drew up an important proclamation relative to squatters on the crown-lands. Thousands accompanied him to the quay when he embarked, and every eye strained after the vessel—the Inconstant—as it made its way down the river in the gloom of a Canadian snow-storm. He landed at Plymouth, on December 1st, *without any honours*, by the special orders of Government, who sent down a special messenger to prohibit them; but he was amply indemnified by the respect paid to him by the people, and the tokens of respect and confidence given him during his journey to London. Lady Durham, Earl Grey's daughter, immediately resigned her situation in the Queen's household; but the ingratitude of his party made no difference in the political sentiments and conduct of her husband, who was consistent to the last. But his race was run—his heart was broken; and he died on 28th July 1840, the victim of ingratitude from a party on whom he had conferred the most essential services.—*Ann. Reg.* 1840; *Chron.* 173. MARTINEAU, ii. 390, 391.

Canada was not the only portion of the British dominions which was convulsed during the disastrous years 1838 and 1839. The WEST INDIES also shared in the convulsion; and so great was the discontent there, that it was prevented only by absolute impotence from breaking into open rebellion. The apprentice system, as had been predicted by all really acquainted with the circumstances, had entirely failed in practice, and produced, instead of quiet and contentment, a degree of irritation on all sides, which had now risen to such a height as rendered its abandonment indispensable. It could not possibly be otherwise. The negroes thought they had been really emancipated by the Imperial Legislature, and that the full fruition of their rights was only prevented by the selfish conduct of the planters and local parliaments; hence continual contention and discord. The negroes could be made to work in many cases only by actual compulsion; and such was their aversion to this supposed invasion of their rights, that more stripes were inflicted by the police magistrates during the freedom of the apprentice system than had been done during the reality of slavery. These melancholy tidings speedily reached Great Britain, and revived the public agitation in all its intensity. Public meetings were held on all sides, in which the immediate and entire abolition of slavery was loudly demanded. Government gave proof of their belief in the reality of these evils; for they introduced, in the early part of 1838, a bill "to give full effect to the intent and meaning of the Act for the abolition of slavery;" and its provisions show how little had hitherto been gained for the cause of humanity by the emancipation of which so much had been said. It declares "that it shall no longer be lawful to place any female apprentice on a treadmill, or on the chain of a penal gang of any parish, or to punish any female apprentice by whipping or beating her person, or by cutting off her hair, for any offence by her committed."[1] The bill contained also

117. Disturbed state of the West Indies, and failure of the Apprentice System.

[1] Parl. Deb. xlvi. 1243, 1279; Ann. Reg. 1838, 345.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

stringent provisions prohibiting corporal punishment on any male apprentice, except in presence of a magistrate specially summoned for the occasion.

118. Lord Brougham's picture of the increased horrors of the slave trade.

Lord Brougham, who was the mouthpiece of the anti-slavery party, which had become violently excited on the recital of these severities, gave a still more melancholy account of the increased horrors of the middle passage and augmentation of the slave trade, in consequence of the nominal emancipation of the English negroes, and the real stimulus given to the foreign slave colonies. On occasion of presenting a petition for immediate emancipation, on 19th January 1838, he said: "The accursed traffic flourishes under the very expedients adopted to crush it, and increases in consequence of the very measures adopted for its extinction. So far from our efforts materially checking it, I find that the bulk of this infernal commerce is undiminished. The premium of insurance at the Havannah on slave-ships is no more than 12½ per cent to cover all risks. Of this 4½ per cent is allowed for the usual sea risk, leaving only 8 per cent to meet the chances of capture. In 1835 eighty slave-ships sailed from the Havannah alone, and six of them brought back an average of 360 slaves; so that 28,000 were brought to that port alone in the year. In December of the same year, between 4000 and 5000 were safely landed at Rio. One of the ships carried 570, another no less than 700 slaves. Of all the criminals engaged in this accursed traffic, the Spaniards, the Portuguese, and the Brazilians are the greatest—the three nations with whom our influence is the most commanding, and our commerce the most intimate and profitable.

119. Continued.

"Lamentable as this increase of the slave trade is, the horrors attending its carrying out are still more heart-rending. The cruiser intrusted with the duty of preventing the traffic, carefully avoids approaching the creek or harbour where the slavers are lying. She stands out,

therefore, just so far as to command a view of the port from the mast-head, being herself quite out of sight. The slaver, believing the coast to be clear, accomplishes his crime and makes sail. Let us see how the unavoidable miseries of the middle passage are exasperated by the contraband nature of the adventure—how the unavoidable mischief is aggravated by the means taken to extirpate it. Every consideration is sacrificed to swiftness of sailing in the construction of the slave-ships, which are built so narrow as to put their safety in peril, being made just broad enough on the beam to keep the sea. What is the consequence to the slaves? Before the trade was put down in 1807, the slaves had the benefit of what was termed "the Slave-carrying Act," which gave the unhappy victims the benefit of a certain space between the decks, in which they might breathe the tainted air more freely, and a certain supply of water. But now there is nothing of the kind, and the slave is in the condition in which our debates found him half a century ago, when the venerable Clarkson awakened the world to his sufferings.

120. Concluded.

"The scantiest portion of food which will support life is alone provided; and the wretched Africans are compressed and stowed away in every nook and cranny of the ship, as if they were dead goods concealed on board smuggling vessels. On being discovered, the slaver has to determine whether he will endeavour to regain his port or will push on across the Atlantic, reaching the American shores with a part at least of his lading. No sooner does the miscreant find that the cruiser is gaining upon him, than he bethinks him of lightening the ship, and casts overboard men, women, and children. Does he first knock off their fetters? No! because these irons, by which they have been held together in couples for safety, are not screwed together and padlocked, so as to be removed in case of danger from tempest or fire, but they *are riveted*—welded together by the blacksmith in

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

his forge, never to be removed or loosened until, after the horrors of the middle passage, the children of misery shall be landed to bondage in the civilised world. The irons, too, serve the purpose of weights; and if time be allowed, more weights are added, to the end that the wretches may be entangled, to prevent their swimming. Nor is this all. Instances have been recorded of other precautions for the same purpose. Water-casks have been filled with human beings, and one vessel threw twelve overboard thus laden. In one chase, two slave-ships endeavoured, but in vain, to make their escape, and in the attempt they flung five hundred human beings into the sea, of all ages and either sex." [1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xlvi. 1207, 1288; Ann. Reg. 1838, 88, 89.

121. Violent clamour in England, and total abolition of slavery. Aug. 1.

The Duke of Wellington and Lord Glenelg acquitted Lord Brougham of all exaggeration in this harrowing statement, which affords a melancholy picture of the aggravation of real evils by rash and ill-judged efforts for their removal. The true way to put down the trade in slaves was to make it not worth while for any one to import them, and this could only be done by rendering the labour of the slaves already settled in the West Indies so productive that no additions to their number were required. Instead of this, the emancipation of the negroes, by rendering their labour less productive, increased the demand for slaves in the slave colonies of other states, and thus fearfully extended this infernal traffic. But though this was clearly pointed out at the time, yet there was no getting the public to be disabused on the subject. They persisted in holding that the labour of freemen was more productive than that of slaves, and that the slave trade would be at once abolished by the extinction of slavery in the British West India islands. So violent did the clamour become, and so unequivocally was it manifested in the large constituencies, that the planters, who had already suffered severely from the refractory spirit of the slaves, and the difficulty of getting them to submit to continuous labour, took the

only course which in the circumstances remained open to them; and on the recommendation of Sir Lionel Smith, the governor of Jamaica, the parliament of that island abolished the apprentice system altogether, and declared all the negroes free on an early day. The provincial legislatures of all the other islands adopted the same course, and on the 1st August 1838 SLAVERY ENTIRELY CEASED IN THE BRITISH COLONIES.[1]

[1] Sir Lionel Smith's Speech, June 5, 1838; Ann. Reg. 1838, 346, 347.

122. Reception of the emancipation in the West Indies.

Sir Lionel Smith transmitted to Government the following account of the manner in which this great change was received in Jamaica: "It is impossible for me to do justice to the good order, decorum, and gratitude which the whole of the labouring population manifested upon this happy occasion. Not even the irregularity of a drunken individual occurred. Though joy beamed in every countenance, it was throughout the island tempered with solemn thankfulness to God; and the churches and chapels were everywhere filled with these happy people, in humble offering of praise for the great blessing He had conferred upon them." The Bishop of Jamaica bore similar testimony: "I had long known," said he, "the objects of this benevolent measure as the most patient, enduring, and long-suffering upon earth, and not easily provoked; but it was not until the actual promulgation of this great and glorious measure of justice and mercy that I was enabled fully to appreciate this advance in Christian principles. The quiet manner in which the whole has passed off has added much to the general effect, and made a deep impression on men's minds."[2]

[2] Sir Lionel Smith to Lord Glenelg, Aug. 8, 1838; Bishop of Jamaica to Lord Glenelg, Aug. 6, 1838; Ann. Reg. 1838, 348.

123. Difficulties consequent on it.

It is a noble spectacle to see a great nation voluntarily repairing wrong by a great act of mercy; and it is doubly so when that act was not done at the expense merely of others, but that a lasting and heavy burden had been undertaken by it to indemnify the immediate sufferers by the change. The immediate results of emancipation did not belie these flattering appearances; and nearly two months after the change, Sir Lionel Smith

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

wrote to the Colonial Secretary that "experience had now established two important facts: first, that the negroes were willing, and even eager, to work for fair remuneration; and that so far from their resorting to the woods, to squat in idleness, as had been predicted, they submitted to the most galling oppression rather than be driven from their homes." But unhappily these flattering appearances were as shortlived as they were fallacious; and negro emancipation remains a lasting proof, that great alterations in human affairs are not to be made with the rapidity of changes of scene on the opera stage, and that to be enduring they must be as slow and imperceptible as the revolutions of nature. Before many months had elapsed, it was found that, though willing to work occasionally when it suited their inclinations to do so, yet the negroes were averse to *continuous* labour, and demanded such high wages for what they did perform, as rendered it more than doubtful whether cultivation at such rates could be carried on to a profit. Eight or nine dollars a-month for working five days in the week, of nine hours each, besides house and garden-ground, came soon to be the wages generally demanded, and in many cases given. These rates, however, were soon found to be higher than the price of sugar, reduced as it was by the heavy import-duty and contraction of the currency in Great Britain, could afford. Thence ensued combinations among labourers to raise their wages, which were strongly supported by the Baptist missionaries, who warmly sympathised with the feelings of their sable flocks, and among the planters to get them down, who were as strongly urged on by stern necessity. Disorder and violence succeeded as a matter of course, which both seriously impeded the progress of rural labour, and engendered an angry feeling between employer and employed, occasioning frequent collisions, which all the efforts of the stipendiary magistracy were unable to prevent.[1]

Sept. 24, 1838.

[1] Mr Burge's Note, Oct. 23, 1838; Sir Lionel Smith's Despatches, Nov. 3, 1838; Ann. Reg. 1838, 351-359.

Matters were brought to a crisis in Jamaica and the

other islands by the promulgation of an Act passed in the Imperial Parliament in 1838, laying down new regulations for the management of prisons in the colony, and empowering Ministers to dismiss certain persons from the offices they held in them. This Act excited an universal storm, and the Jamaica legislature having assembled on the 30th October, their first act was to pass a resolution that this Act was a violation of their rights as British subjects; that it should not have the force of law; and that till it was repealed they would desist from all their legislative functions, except such as might be indispensable for the public credit. This resolution was carried by 24 to 5. Upon this the Assembly was prorogued; and as it again, on 8th November, adhered to the resolution, Sir Lionel Smith dissolved the angry assemblage. "No House of Assembly," said he, "can now be found which will acknowledge the authority of Queen, Lords, and Commons to enact laws for Jamaica, or that will be likely to pass just and prudent laws for a large portion of the negro population lately brought into freedom." The new Assembly met on December 18, but the first thing it did was to pass a resolution adhering to the former one. Upon this it also was dissolved under circumstances of violence, which forcibly recalled the similar scenes in the Long Parliament. In a word, Jamaica, like Canada, was now on the border of insurrection; and nothing but its obvious impotence against Great Britain, and the extreme pecuniary embarrassments of the proprietors in the island in consequence of the contraction of the currency at home, and the difficulty of getting the negroes to work on their estates, prevented a civil war, as in North America, from breaking out.[1]

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

124. Refractoriness of the Jamaica legislature, and its dissolution. Oct. 30.

Nov. 8.

Dec. 18.

[1] Sir Lionel Smith's Despatches, Nov. and Dec. 1838. Ann. Reg. 1838, 348-351; 1839, 94-98.

It is impossible to defend the extreme violence of the language which, on some of these occasions, was used by the West India planters; which was the more reprehensible that they had in reality a good cause to defend, which required no intemperance of expression for its

125. Fatal results of emancipation.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1838.

support. Experience has now demonstrated this in the most unequivocal manner. The measures of the Imperial Parliament had brought ruin upon the West India planters, and the emancipation of the negroes was the last drop which made the cup of misery overflow. The insuperable difficulty which in every age has rendered the West India question so embarrassing is, that Europeans who will work for wages are destroyed by the heat of the climate, and that the Africans, who do not suffer from it, will not work unless forced to do so. It is probable that the wit of man to the end of the world will hardly discover an exit from this dilemma, but either by the abandonment of cultivation in the tropical regions, or by the retention of slavery, at least in a modified form, in them. But the English Parliament, impelled by the loud clamour of a vast numerical majority in the British Islands, thought they had discovered a short-hand way of solving the difficulty by instantly emancipating the negroes, and trusting to their alleged readiness to work as freemen at days' wages for the continuance of cultivation in the West Indies. The result is now fully ascertained.* Though not averse to occasional labour at high wages, the African cannot be brought to submit to the steady continued effort requisite to carry on cultivation in the tropical regions. This is now sufficiently demonstrated

* Exports and Shipping from British West Indies, and Exports of British Manufactures to them.

Years.	Sugar.	Rum.	Coffee.	Shipping.	British Manufactures Exported.
	Cwt.	Gall.	Lb.	Tons.	£
1828	4,213,636	5,620,174	29,987,078	272,800	3,289,704
1829	4,152,614	6,307,294	26,911,785	263,268	3,612,085
1836	3,601,791	4,868,168	18,903,426	237,922	3,786,453
1837	3,306,775	4,418,349	15,577,888	226,428	3,456,745
1838	3,520,676	4,641,210	17,538,655	235,195	3,393,441
1839	2,824,372	4,021,820	11,485,675	196,715	3,986,598
1840	2,214,764	3,780,979	12,797,039	181,736	3,574,970
1841	2,151,217	2,770,161	9,927,689	174,975	2,504,004

—Porter's *Progress of the Nation*, 3d edit., 360, 367, and 803, 804.

by experience: the amount of agricultural produce raised in the West Indies had sunk to *less than a half* of what it had been in 1828, within three years after final emancipation; and the export of British manufactures to them, the measure of their material comforts, had diminished in an alarming proportion. Nothing was awanting to complete their ruin but the removal of protecting duties, and the admission of foreign slave-grown sugar on terms approaching to equality; and this was ere long conceded to the loud demand of the same party which had insisted for immediate emancipation. The effects of this latter measure, and the lamentable impulse it has given to the foreign slave-trade in its worst and most atrocious form, will form an interesting and instructive topic in a future chapter.

126. Position of the Ministry.

This violent collision between the British Government and the West Indian colonies has acquired greater celebrity than would have otherwise belonged to it, from its having induced a conflict of parties which rendered necessary a resignation of Ministers, and occasioned the first serious shock to the Whig power, thought to be permanently secured by the Reform Bill. Since the accession of Queen Victoria, Ministers had never been able to command a majority of more than 25 or 30 on any vital question; but being cordially supported by the Sovereign, and aware that the balance of parties had now become such that a larger majority could not for a very long period be expected by either, they still retained office. Sir R. Peel, who with equal talent and judgment led the Opposition, was wisely desirous not to precipitate matters, and supported Ministers on all occasions when any motion perilous to the monarchy or existing institutions was brought forward. Thus the Government had gone on since the accession of the Queen, existing, as it were, on the sufferance of its opponents, but still retaining such a majority in the Lower House as rendered it unadvisable

CHAP. XXXVII.

1839.

for their adversaries in the mean time to dispossess them of power.

127. Government measures suspending the constitution of Jamaica.

Ministers, however, felt much irritated at the pertinacious resistance of the Assembly in Jamaica to their measures relative to the West Indies; and even if they had been otherwise disposed, the urban constituencies were so violently excited on the subject, that it was probably impossible to delay any longer some very stringent measure of coercion. Mr Labouchere, accordingly, on 9th April 1839, brought forward the Government measure on the subject, which was nothing less than a suspension of the constitution of the island for five years, and vesting the government of it, in the mean time, in the Governor and Council, and three commissioners to be sent from England, to assist in the consideration of the topics to which their early consideration would be directed, particularly the improvement of the negroes, prison discipline, and the establishment of poor-laws. This bill was opposed by the whole strength of the Opposition; and the vote on it produced a crisis which all but overturned the Administration.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xlvi. 1243; Ann. Reg. 1839, 97-99.

128. Argument of Ministers in support of the bill.

On the part of Government, it was argued by Mr Labouchere, Sir George Grey, and Lord John Russell: "Previous to the act of emancipation, the state of prison discipline was of little importance, as all punishments were inflicted on the slaves by the domestic authority of the master, who was unwilling to lose the benefit of his services by sending him to jail. This state of things, however, ceased when slavery came to an end; and in addition to that, the existing prison regulations terminated when the apprenticeship ceased, which rendered a new prison bill a matter of necessity. Nevertheless, it is a measure which was in vain sought to be enforced by five successive applications to the colonial Assembly. In fact, from the passing of the celebrated resolutions of 1822 down to the present moment, not a single measure has been adopted in furtherance of these objects for the relief

of the slaves, that has not been forced upon the House of Assembly by the Imperial Parliament, with the exception of the Emancipation Bill of 1833, purchased by the noble sacrifice of this country. Three distinct occasions had arisen since that period, on which our interference had been found necessary;—when we extended the duration of that Act for a year; when we carried the Apprenticeship Amendment Bill; when we passed the Prison Bill; and the present difference is only part of the controversy that had been so long in existence between the two legislatures with regard to the treatment of the negro population.

"After five years' experience of the fruitlessness of all recommendations to the House of Assembly, Ministers had felt bound, in accordance with the spirit of the resolution of last session of Parliament, to ask for power to dismiss improper persons from offices which they had abused in the prisons,—a power absolutely necessary to the due discharge of the responsibility with which Government was intrusted. The act was not sought to be forced on the colony; on the contrary, its adoption was recommended only in the most conciliatory manner. All the customary formalities were studiously observed in bringing it forward; but when submitted, it was met at once with a decided negative. In addition to this, the violent and vituperative language of the Jamaica Assembly formed no inconsiderable argument for such a temporary suspension of its functions as might give them time to recover their temper, and enable them to discharge with propriety their legislative functions. If something of this sort was not done, the authority of Great Britain over its colonies would be speedily lost, and every little island that owed its existence to the protection afforded by the Imperial Government, would not scruple to set its power at defiance."[1]

129. Concluded.

[1] Parl. Deb. xlvi. 247, 1263; Ann. Reg. 1839, 98-100.

On the other hand, it was maintained by Sir R. Peel, Lord Stanley, and Mr Gladstone: "Without pretend-

CHAP. XXXVII.

1839.

130. Answer of the Conservatives.

ing to justify the violent language used by the Jamaica Assembly in May, yet it is doubtful whether the bill now under consideration is either justified by its antecedents, or recommended by its probable consequences. In a country which had been accustomed always to impose its own taxations, it is in contemplation to vest in a governor and council, and three commissioners appointed by the Crown, authority to levy taxes to the amount of £500,000 a-year; and that too at the very time when Lord Durham, in his report on Canada, has recommended them to make the executive officers of that colony responsible, not to the Crown or the home Government, but to the colonial Assembly. Is it likely that we shall advance the cause of negro emancipation throughout the world, and especially in the United States, by thus proclaiming that it is inconsistent with responsible government, and that the first thing which must be done after its adoption is to destroy the political rights of the State by which it has been adopted? Many considerations urge us to consider maturely whether no other alternative exists, in the present posture of affairs, than the entire abolition of the Jamaica constitution. The insolent language of the Assembly cannot be justly pleaded in justification of such an extreme measure; for what popular government could be maintained for an hour if that ground were held justifiable? The Jamaica Assembly had no slight grounds of provocation. When it was proposed last year to remit the remaining term of apprenticeship, Ministers very properly met the demand with a refusal, alleging with truth that the national faith was pledged to its continuance for the entire term of seven years. Yet, in the very next year, Sir Lionel Smith, on the part of Government, urged on the Jamaica Assembly that they ought to terminate the apprenticeship themselves. Finding then the executive government combined with the influence of numbers at home, no option was left to them but to do what the Government at home had refused to sanction, and abo-

lish the apprenticeship. This is the real cause of difference between the two legislatures, and on this account the colonial Assembly is entitled to some little indulgence.

131. Concluded.

"'There are,' said Mr Canning in 1824, 'three possible modes in which the Parliament might deal with the people of Jamaica. By the application of direct force we might crush them with a finger; we might harass them with penal regulations restraining their navigation; or we might pursue the slow and steady course of authoritative admonition. I am for trying first that which I have last mentioned; I hope we shall never be driven to the second. And with respect to the first, I trust that no feeling of wounded pride, no motive of questionable expedience—nothing short of real and demonstrable necessity, shall induce me to moot the awful question of the transcendental power of Parliament over every dependency of the British Crown. That transcendental power is an arcanum of the empire, which ought to be kept back within the penetralia of the constitution. It exists, but it should be veiled. It should not be produced in cases of petty refractoriness, nor indeed on any occasion short of the utmost extremity of the State.' Adopting the sentiments of this great statesman, are we prepared to assert that the occasion which has now occurred is one in which the necessity appears of bringing the transcendental power from the penetralia of the temple? Devoutly is it to be wished that the House may be made to perceive the probable consequences of the double precedent now about to be set, and the general uneasiness which will prevail. The violent step now under consideration is proposed to be applied to half the whole white population in the British colonies in the West Indies and South America. The whole public revenue of these dependencies is £540,000; that of Jamaica alone is £300,000.[1] The value of our imports into these colonies in 1838 was (official) £5,806,000; that

[1] Parl. Deb. xlvii. 943, 967; Ann. Reg. 1839, 104-106.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

of Jamaica alone, £3,000,000. The exports from our South American and West Indian colonies were laid at £9,932,000. Such is the importance of the colonies into which it is now proposed to throw the firebrand of discord, by at once stripping the most important of them of their whole rights as British citizens!"

132. Ministers have only a majority of 5, and resign. May 7.

The debate was protracted through several nights, and counsel were heard at great length against the bill. The division took place at five in the morning of 6th May, and although Ministers were supported by the whole of the Irish Catholic and Scotch Liberal members, which made up their usual majority, they had on this occasion only one of FIVE, the numbers being 294 to 289. So small a majority upon a vital question necessarily drew after it a resignation by Ministers; for, deducting the members of the Cabinet who had a seat in the House, they were actually in a minority. It was a matter of no surprise, therefore, when Lord John Russell announced on the 7th May that Ministers had tendered their resignation, which had been accepted by her Majesty. The reasons assigned by him for this step were, that the vote which had passed must weaken the authority of the Crown in the colonies, by giving support to the contumacy of Jamaica, encourage others of them to follow the bad example of its Assembly, and render impossible the measures which they had in contemplation for the settlement of the affairs of Upper and Lower Canada.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xlvii. 967, 973; Ann. Reg. 1839, 119, 120.

133. Real reasons of this step, as assigned by Lord Melbourne.

Although these reasons, thus publicly assigned, appeared abundantly sufficient to justify the step which had been taken, yet they were not the real ones. Other and more pressing remained behind, which, perhaps with more candour than prudence, were on a subsequent night stated by Lord Melbourne in the House of Lords. "I should be exceedingly sorry if the accusation could be justly made against me of abandoning my post in circumstances of difficulty or danger. When I was removed from office in 1835, I stated, in reply to various addresses presented

to me, that disunions among its supporters had broken up the Administration, and that nothing but the most complete co-operation of all who in any degree thought with us could re-establish us in power, or maintain us there for any length of time, if re-established then. The union I advised has subsisted for a considerable length of time, but at length it has been broken up; and considering that there was so much discord among my supporters as to render it impossible for me to conduct the Government efficiently, and for the good of the country, I resigned my office. A great change has lately taken place in the constitution, which has excited considerable alarm in the minds of many who had great experience and knowledge in public affairs. One of the ablest and most experienced statesmen in Europe gave it as his opinion, with respect to these changes, 'They may do very well in times of peace, when there is no financial difficulty; but should we be involved in war, and feel the pressure of pecuniary difficulties, you will see how your new constitution will work.' Unless there be a due regard to the dictates of common sense in the country, that difficulty will be hard to meet. I will not attempt to decide which of the parties which divide the country is the better fitted to govern it; but I will quote a remark of William III., a man of most prudent, simple, and sagacious mind. 'I do not know,' said he to Bishop Burnet, 'whether a monarchy or a republic be the better form of government; much may be said on either side; but I can tell you that which is the worst — *a monarchy which has not the power to put in effect the measures necessary for the good of the people.*'"[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xlviii. 267, 288; Ann. Reg. 1839, 128-134.

As a matter of course, the Queen, upon the resignation of Lord Melbourne, sent for the Duke of Wellington, the last premier of the party which had now displaced its adversaries; and he recommended to her Majesty to send for Sir R. Peel, upon the ground that, situated as the constitution now was, the leader of the Government should

1834. Sir R. Peel is sent for, and forms the programme of a Government.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1839.

be in the House of Commons. Sir Robert, accordingly, was sent for, and on entering the royal cabinet he was informed by her Majesty, who acted throughout the whole transaction in the most candid and honourable manner, "that she had parted with her late Ministers with great regret, as they had given her entire satisfaction." Yielding, however, to the conditions of a constitutional monarchy, she tendered to him the formation of a Cabinet, which he accepted, at the same time stating the difficulties which any new Ministry would have to encounter. He accordingly conferred with his immediate friends, and next day laid before her Majesty a list of persons whom he designed to form part of the new Cabinet, embracing the Duke of Wellington, Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Ellenborough, Lord Stanley, Sir James Graham, Sir Henry Hardinge, and Mr Goulburn. The Duke of Wellington desired a seat in the Cabinet and the lead in the House of Lords, without office; but the Queen wished that he should hold some important situation, to which wish his Grace would doubtless have at once acceded. Some progress had been made in filling up the principal offices, when the negotiation was abruptly brought to a close by a difficulty about certain ladies in her Majesty's household, which ended in reinstating the Whig Government in power.[1]

May 7.

[1] Sir R. Peel's Statement, Parl. Deb. xlvii. 984; Ann. Reg. 1839, 120.

135. Difficulty about the household appointments, which causes the negotiation to fail. May 20.

So little had the new Premier anticipated any difficulty on this subject, that at the first conference with her Majesty he did not even mention it to her; and it was only on turning to the Red Book, after conferring with some of his proposed colleagues, he found that the two ladies holding the highest situations in the Queen's household were the wife of Lord Normanby and the sister of Lord Morpeth, the noblemen most opposed to him in politics. Upon this he stated that he hoped these exalted ladies would resign, but that if they did not, he must propose their removal, in the necessity of which his colleagues acquiesced. When the subject, however, was

brought before her Majesty on the following morning, she stated that she would consent to no change in the ladies of her household, erroneously conceiving that what Sir Robert intended was the change of *all* the ladies of her household. Sir Robert, however, remained firm, conceiving, as he afterwards stated in the House, that taking into view the difficulties of his position, having to contend with a hostile majority in the House of Commons, and very great embarrassment in Ireland and the colonies, he could not carry on the government with advantage to the country, unless cordially supported, or at least not thwarted, by those who enjoyed her Majesty's confidence. The Queen's advisers, consisting of the late Cabinet, conceived that this was an unwonted and unjustifiable encroachment on the control, which naturally belonged to her, of the ladies of her own household, and accordingly, after written communications to this effect, drawn on the Queen's side by Lord Melbourne's Cabinet, had been interchanged, the negotiation broke off, Lord Melbourne was sent for, and the whole Whig Ministry were reinstated in power, in the situations they had respectively held before their resignations.[1] *

[1] Sir R. Peel's Statement, Parl. Deb. xlvii. 987, 989, 1001.

* "BUCKINGHAM PALACE, *May* 10, 1839.—The Queen having considered the proposal made to her yesterday by Sir R. Peel, to remove the Ladies of her Bedchamber, cannot consent to adopt a course which she conceives to be contrary to usage, and which is repugnant to her feelings."

To this communication Sir R. Peel, the same forenoon, returned the following answer: "Sir R. Peel presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has had the honour of receiving your Majesty's note of this morning. Sir R. Peel trusts that your Majesty will permit him to state to your Majesty his impression with respect to the circumstances which have led to the termination of his attempt to form an Administration for the conduct of your Majesty's service.

"In the interview with which your Majesty honoured Sir R. Peel yesterday morning, after he had submitted to your Majesty the names of those he proposed to recommend to your Majesty for the principal executive appointments, he mentioned to your Majesty his earnest wish to be enabled, by your Majesty's sanction, so to constitute your Majesty's household that your Majesty's confidential servants might have the advantage of a public demonstration of your Majesty's full support and confidence; and at the same time, so far as possible consistently with such demonstration, each individual appointment in the household should be entirely acceptable to your Majesty's personal feelings. On your Majesty's expressing a desire that the Earl of Liverpool should hold an office in the household, Sir R. Peel immediately requested your Majesty's per-

CHAP. XXXVII.

1839.

136. Observations of Sir R. Peel, Lord Melbourne, and the Duke of Wellington, on the subject.

From the failure of the attempt to construct a Ministry upon Conservative principles on a matter apparently so slight as the Ladies of the Bedchamber, it is evident that Sir R. Peel was by no means sanguine as to the success of his mission, nor annoyed at the failure of the attempt to fulfil it. He himself said shortly afterwards in Parliament, that "his difficulties were not Canada, they were not Jamaica; his difficulties were *Ireland*." Lord Melbourne observed in the House of Peers: "I frankly declare that I resume office unequivocally, and solely for this reason, that I will not abandon my Sovereign in a situation of difficulty and distress, and especially when a demand is made upon her Majesty with which I think she ought not to comply—a demand inconsistent with her personal honour, and which, if acquiesced in, would render her reign liable to all the changes and variations of political parties, and render her domestic life one constant scene of unhappiness and discomfort." And the Duke of Wellington said: "It is essential that the Minister should possess the entire confidence of her Majesty, and with that view should exercise the usual control permitted

mission at once to confer on Lord Liverpool the office of Lord Steward, or any other office which he might prefer. Sir R. Peel then observed that he should have every wish to apply a similar principle to the chief appointments which are filled by the ladies of your Majesty's household; upon which your Majesty was pleased to remark, 'that you must retain the whole of these appointments, and that it was your Majesty's pleasure that the whole should continue as at present without any change.' The Duke of Wellington, in the interview to which your Majesty subsequently admitted him, understood also that this was your Majesty's determination, and concurred with Sir R. Peel in opinion, that considering the great difficulties of the present crisis, and the expediency of making every effort, in the first instance, to conduct the public business of the country with the aid of the present Parliament, it was essential to the success of the mission with which your Majesty had honoured Sir R. Peel, that he should have such public proof of your Majesty's entire support and confidence, which would be afforded by the permission to make some changes on your Majesty's household, which your Majesty resolved on maintaining entirely without change. Having had the opportunity, through your Majesty's gracious consideration, of reflecting upon this point, he humbly submits to your Majesty that he is reluctantly compelled, by a sense of public duty, and of the interest of your Majesty's service, to adhere to the opinion which he ventured to express to your Majesty."—*Parl. Deb.* xlvii. 985; and *Ann. Reg.* 1839, pp. 121, 122.

to the Minister by the Sovereign in the construction of the household. There is the greatest possible difference between the *household of the Queen-consort and the household of the Queen-regnant*; that of the former, who is not a political personage, being comparatively of little importance."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xlvii. 987-989, xlviii. 72-84.

137. Election of a Speaker, and second Jamaica Bill.

The first trying question which awaited the Ministry after their resumption of office, was the election of a Speaker, in consequence of the resignation of Mr Abercromby, who had held it for four years, on the ground of ill health. Two candidates, both unexceptionable in point of qualification, were proposed—Mr Shaw Lefevre by the Ministry, Mr Goulburn by the Opposition. The former was carried by a majority of 18, which might be considered as a fair test, at that period, of the comparative strength of parties in the House of Commons. Government, however, were not so fortunate in their next measure, which was a second Jamaica Bill. It was strongly opposed in the Commons by Sir R. Peel, and only carried by a majority of 10. In the Lords it was reduced to the shape for which Sir R. Peel had contended in the Lower House. As so amended, it allowed time to the Jamaica Assembly to re-enact the usual laws, without which the business of the island could not proceed, and invested the Governor and Council with power to re-enact these laws in the event of the Assembly separating without renewing them. In this form the bill passed the House of Lords, and was accepted by the Jamaica Assembly;—"a measure," said Lord J. Russell, "in its present state, not nearly so effective as I could wish, and only better than none."[2]

[2] Parl. Deb. xlix. 85.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ENGLAND FROM THE RESTORATION OF THE WHIG MINISTRY IN MAY 1839 TO THEIR FALL IN AUGUST 1841.

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1839.

1. Queen's popularity after her accession.

It is now time to resume the story of the personal life of the Sovereign, which, amidst the multiplied transactions—social, colonial, and parliamentary—of this period, has been hitherto overlooked, but now came to exercise an important influence on public affairs. Ever since her accession to the throne, the youthful Queen had been the object of intense interest and affection to her subjects, and this increased in warmth as the period of her expected coronation approached. A graceful and accomplished horsewoman, the young Sovereign delighted in appearing before her admiring people, by whom she was always greeted with enthusiasm. No apprehensions of personal danger from the insane or disaffected for a moment deterred her from showing herself in this manner, though the event proved that such fears would have been too well founded. "Let my people see me," was her constant answer to those who suggested the possibility of such risk. This intrepid conduct met with its deserved reward; the Queen's popularity increased every day. The spectacle of a youthful and beautiful Queen appearing on horseback amidst her subjects, with no other guards but their loyalty and affection, was one which could not fail of speaking to the heart of a nation, in which the chivalrous feelings were still so strongly rooted as they

were in the English people. One melancholy event, terminating in a mournful end, alone interrupted this cordial feeling; but its influence was of short duration; and even while it lasted—while the people lamented that their Sovereign should have been misled by erroneous information—yet they respected the motives by which she had been actuated, and saw in it only a proof of her earnest desire to uphold the purity of a court to which her sway had lent so much lustre.[1]

[1] Mart. ii. 440; Ann. Reg. 1837, 227, Chron.

2. Her coronation. June 28, 1838.

The coronation took place on the 28th June 1838, and though shorn of much of the quaint feudal splendour, which had now become antiquated, it was conducted on a scale of very great magnificence. So general was the interest excited by its approach, that it was calculated that, on the day when it took place, four hundred thousand strangers were added to the million and a half which already formed the population of the metropolis. The great change introduced was the substitution of a procession through the streets for the wonted banquet in Westminster Hall; a change suited to the altered temper of the times, and abundantly justified by the result; for instead of a limited assembly of nobles, the whole inhabitants of London were admitted to witness the ceremony. "The earth," says the contemporary annalist, "was alive with men, the habitations in the line of march cast forth their occupants to the balconies and the house-tops. The windows were lifted out of their frames, and the asylum of private life, that sanctuary which our countrymen guard with such traditional jealousy, was on this occasion made accessible to the gaze of the entire world. The morning was dark and lowering, but the clouds rolled away with the firing of the guns from the Tower; and before the procession set out, the sun was shining with uncommon brilliancy. The procession moved from Buckingham Palace, up Constitution Hill, along Piccadilly, down St James's Street, and thence along Pall Mall and Parliament Street to Westminster Abbey. The

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1839.

venerable pile was splendidly decorated in the interior for the occasion, and all the venerable usages, redolent of remote antiquity, religiously observed. The Queen's personal appearance and animated countenance were the admiration of every beholder. Among the numerous foreigners of distinction present, none attracted so much notice as Marshal Soult, who was sent as special ambassador from France to do honour to her Majesty. Thunders of applause shook Guildhall, when, at a splendid entertainment given by the Corporation of London to the illustrious stranger, he stood up beside his ancient antagonist in arms, the Duke of Wellington, to return thanks when their healths were jointly drank. The economical part of the nation was gratified by the lessened cost of the ceremony; for the entire expense was only £70,000, whereas that of George IV. had cost £243,000. A general illumination closed the festivities, the lights of which were not extinguished when the rays of the sun on the following morning shone on the metropolis.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1838; Chron. 95, 99, 136, 137. Mart. ii. 440.

3. Her marriage to Prince Albert.

A still more important event in the history of the Queen, which has been attended with the happiest consequences, took place in the following year. Great anxiety had for some time prevailed in the country on the subject of her Majesty's marriage, both on account of her own deserved popularity, and from a sense of the importance, in the troubled times which were evidently approaching, of a direct succession to the throne. As the Marriage Act confined her Majesty's choice to foreign families, several young princes, attracted by the splendid prize, flocked to England, and shared in the magnificent hospitalities of Windsor; but for long the Queen's choice seemed undecided. Several surmises, however, at length were heard of a preference shown for a young Prince of prepossessing figure and elegant manners; and universal satisfaction was diffused by the confirmation they received from her Majesty communicating to the Privy Council, assembled at Buckingham Palace on

November 23, 1839, her intention of allying herself with PRINCE ALBERT OF SAXE-COBURG AND GOTHA. This announcement, which, by her Majesty's gracious permission, was immediately made public, was speedily followed by the insertion, by royal command, of the Prince's name with the rest of the royal family; and he was naturalised by a bill introduced into the House of Peers on 20th January 1840, which passed rapidly by a suspension of the standing orders. Ministers proposed £50,000 as the annuity to the Prince, which was, on the motion of the Duke of Wellington, somewhat ungraciously reduced to £30,000. Mr Hume proposed to reduce it still further to £21,000, but this was negatived by a large majority in the Commons. The marriage took place on the 10th February 1840, with all the pomp and solemnity usual on such occasions; and the public satisfaction was wound up to the highest pitch by the birth of the Princess-Royal, which took place on Nov. 21, 1840.[1]

Nov. 23, 1839.
Jan. 10, 1840.
Jan. 20.
Feb. 10, 1840.
1 Ann. Reg. 1839, 313, 314; 1840, Chron. 24, 110. Parl. Deb. 41, 554, 611, 633.

4. Reflections on this auspicious event.

Thus did the family of Saxe-Coburg ascend the throne of England—a memorable event in British annals, when it is recollected that, since the Conquest in 1066, only five changes of the reigning family had taken place—the Normans, the Plantagenets, the Tudors, the Stuarts, and the Hanoverians. The nation had good reason to congratulate itself that on this occasion the sceptre passed to a new family, not by the rude grasp of conquest, or amidst the agonies of civil war, but by the free choice of a young Princess, the undoubted Sovereign of the realm, who, in singleness of heart, bestowed her hand on the deserved object of her youthful predilection. Cousin-german by blood, the Queen and the Prince were nearly of the same age, and had been acquainted in their early years; but it was not till they met, in the bloom of youth, in the princely halls of Windsor, that their acquaintance assumed a more serious and tender form. The Prince possessed all the qualities fitted to attract the attention of his royal cousin. Gifted by nature with an elegant

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1840.

and commanding figure, he possessed at the same time a countenance in which an expression, naturally mild and benevolent, was mingled with a certain shade of reflection, and even melancholy. His character, since he was placed in the delicate and difficult situation of Prince-consort, but not regnant, has corresponded with what might have been anticipated from this physiognomy. Carefully abstaining from any interference with party-politics, or any intermingling, at least in a visible way, with affairs of state, he has devoted abilities of no ordinary kind, and a disposition in the highest degree benevolent and philanthropic, to the encouragement of art and enterprise, and the alleviation in every possible way of human suffering. His influence with the Queen, whose remarkable talents and patriotic spirit are fitted in a peculiar manner to appreciate these qualities, must be great, but it has never appeared in a dangerous or invidious form; and the name of Prince Albert has, since his marriage with his royal consort, been associated only with projects of patriotism and works of beneficence.

5. His family, and Protestant principles.

If Great Britain has been fortunate in the personal character of the Prince whom Queen Victoria selected to be her royal consort, the nation has not been less so in the principles of the family from which he was descended. The family of Saxe-Coburg had been amongst the first converts to, and steadiest supporters of, the Reformation. In the castle of Saxe-Coburg Luther sought and found refuge, when endangered in the first rise of the new faith; the apartments in which he dwelt, the bedstead on which he rested, the pulpit from which he preached, are preserved with pious care; and in the portfolio of the youthful Prince who was destined to place a dynasty on the throne of England, were to be found sketches of the venerable pile in which were preserved the relics which had given such distinction to his race. Immense, at this juncture, was the importance of this *confirmed Protestantism* in the royal consort of Queen Victoria. From the

combined influence of the Reform Bill and the equal balance of parties in the House of Commons, it had come to pass that the small majority which cast the balance in favour of the present Administration was entirely composed of Irish Catholics, and by their defection it might at any moment be overturned. To counterbalance so formidable an influence in such a quarter, nothing could be so fortunate as the knowledge of confirmed Protestant principles in the family which now ascended the throne.

6. Legislative measures of the period. Criminal law.

When Ministers could reckon only on so small a majority in the House of Commons, and were in a minority in the Lords, it was scarcely to be expected that any measures of real importance or beneficial tendency could be introduced into Parliament. Yet such was the force of public opinion, that, despite the weakness of the executive, some important measures were during this period in a manner forced upon the Government by the country. The first of these was a bill for the relaxation of the ancient severity of our criminal law. Even after the unwearied and benevolent efforts of Sir Samuel Romilly and Sir James Mackintosh to remove this stain from our statute-book, much remained yet to be done; and public opinion, outstripping in this instance, as in many others, the march of legislation, loudly demanded the abrogation of the penalty of death in a much greater number of instances. Mr Ewart, and a considerable party both in and out of the House of Commons, even went a step farther, and strenuously contended for the entire abolition of the punishment of death, even in cases of cold-blooded murder. To this extreme change, however, fortunately little countenance was given. The Criminal Law Commissioners, to whom the matter had been referred, recommended, in their report in 1837, the abolition of the penalty of death in twenty-one out of the thirty-one cases in which it was still retained. This proposal was adopted in a bill brought in by Lord John Russell, which passed the House of Commons against an amendment moved by

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1839. July 14.

Mr Ewart for the entire abolition of capital punishments by a majority of only *one*—so strongly rooted was the desire for an alleviation of the criminal law in the public mind. It passed the Lords without a division. This was a great and salutary change, and it was followed up by the Criminal Law Commissioners, who before 1845 had presented eight reports, which were consolidated in an act entitled "The Act of Crimes and Punishments." Since that time—that is, during a period now of eleven years—the punishment of death has never been inflicted in Great Britain but in cases of cold-blooded and deliberate murder.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxxvii. 733, xxxviii. 922, 1907; Pol. Dict. ii. 220.

7. Reflections on this subject, and the neglect of secondary punishments.

This has been a great and blessed change; and if it had been followed up by efficient measures to increase and render more stringent the secondary punishments which were to come in place of death, it would have been a subject of unmixed thankfulness and congratulation. Unfortunately, however, this has by no means been the case; and from the entire neglect with which, for the next fifteen years, the subject of transportation has been treated, a new set of evils has arisen, which, if of a less tragic, has proved of a more widespread character than the sanguinary punishments of former times. The reason of this is obvious. The forced labour of convicts is a very great advantage to infant colonies, and is always at first gladly received by them; but after a time the necessity for their assistance is less strongly felt; and if care is not taken to *augment the numbers of free settlers in as great a proportion as that of the penal convicts*, they will come in time to be felt as a very great evil. This change was experienced in the strongest manner in the British penal colonies. From the lasting and widespread distress which, with the exception of three years, pervaded the British empire from 1838 to 1850, the multitude of convicts sentenced to transportation became so large that they greatly exceeded the requirements of the free settlers, New South Wales being at once the most distant colony

of Great Britain, and therefore the most expensive to reach by her emigrants, and the exclusive receptacle for its convicts, became ere long overcharged with the latter description of inhabitants.

8. Mode in which the change was brought about.

Loud murmurs on the subject were in consequence heard in Sydney, upon which Government, to elude the difficulty, *sent them all to Van Diemen's Land*, a colony still farther away, to which no free emigrants could go for less than £25 a-head, while to the American shores the transit cost only £5. As a natural consequence, Van Diemen's Land became choked up with convicts: from three to four thousand were in the end sent there every year, being more than the annual free emigrants. The evil consequence of this disproportion, which was soon generally known, diffused an universal panic in all the colonies, from which petitions for the entire abolition of transportation flowed in on all sides. To these demands Government, not properly understanding the subject, in an evil hour yielded; and the system of transportation, the best which human wisdom ever yet devised, both for the mother country, the colonies, and the criminals, has been, it is to be hoped only for a time, abandoned. The story of this disastrous change will form an important topic in the sequel of this History.

9. Important resolution of Parliament regarding colonisation.

It was fortunate for Great Britain that at the time when this unfortunate change, the result of ignorance and inattention on the part of the central Government, was preparing in regard to transportation, more rational views came to pervade both the legislature and the country on the subject of colonisation generally. On 27th June 1839, resolutions on the subject were brought forward by Mr Ward,* which are of value as embodying, for the first

* "Resolved—I. That the occupation and cultivation of waste lands in the British colonies, by means of emigration, tends to improve the condition of all the industrious classes in the United Kingdom, by diminishing the competition for employment at home, in consequence of the removal of superabundant numbers creating new markets, and increasing the demand for shipping and manufactures.

"II. That the prosperity of colonies, and the progress of colonisation,

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1839.

time in the proceedings of the legislature, the true principles of colonial administration, which had been so often misunderstood or perverted by the selfishness or cupidity of those possessing influence or authority at home. They consisted in disposing of colonial lands, not to a few favoured individuals in huge lots, to whom they might prove a source of great and growing fortune, but in moderate quantities to such as might really undertake their cultivation, and at such reasonable prices as, without discouraging enterprise, might insure an attempt at least to produce reimbursement by their produce. The ruinous effects of the opposite system had been felt both in Canada and Northern Australia, where immense tracts of fertile land were retained in a state of nature from having been imprudently alienated to a few favoured individuals; and the beneficial effects of the system now recommended had been evinced in the new colony of Southern Australia in the most remarkable manner. The resolutions were withdrawn by Mr Ward, as it was too late to legislate on the subject in that session of Parliament; but Mr Labouchere, on the part of Government, announced their adoption of the principles embodied in

mainly depend on the manner in which a right of private property in the waste lands of a colony may be acquired; and that amidst the great variety of methods of disposing of waste lands which have been pursued by the British Government, the most effectual, beyond all comparison, is the plan of a sale, at a fixed, uniform, and sufficient price, for ready money, without any other restriction or condition; and the employment of the whole, or a large fixed proportion of the purchase-money, in affording a passage to the colony cost free to young persons of both sexes of the labouring class, in an equal proportion of the sexes.

"III. That in order to derive the greatest possible public advantage from this method of colonising, it is essential that the permanence of the system should be secured by the Legislature, and that its administration should be intrusted to a distinct subordinate branch of the colonial department, authorised to sell colonial lands in this country; to anticipate the sales of lands by raising loans for emigration on the security of future land-sales; and generally to superintend the arrangements by which the comfort and wellbeing of the emigrants may be secured.

"IV. Resolved, That this method of colonising has been applied by the Legislature to the new colony of South Australia with very remarkable and gratifying results; and that it is expedient that Parliament should extend the South Australian system to all other colonies which are suited to its operations."—*Parl. Deb.* xlviii. 997; *Ann. Reg.* 1839, p. 229.

the resolutions, which had already been applied in the new colony of Southern Australia; and they have formed the basis of colonial administration ever since that time. It is only to be regretted that, combined with these just views of colonies and emigration, there was not introduced a wise and extensive system of transportation, which might not only have relieved the mother country of that prodigious accumulation of incorrigible offenders which has since been felt as so serious an evil, but, by providing a steady supply of forced labour for the formation of roads, bridges, and harbours in the colonies, have left individual free enterprise to devote itself to the cultivation of the separate properties, and thus rendered the increase of crime in the British Islands an additional source of prosperity and happiness to the whole empire.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xlviii. 998, 1017; Ann. Reg. 1839, 229, 241.

10. Important facts connected with emigration and colonisation brought out in this debate.

Some very curious and important facts bearing on the great questions of emigration and colonisation were brought out in the course of this debate. It was stated by Mr Ward, that in the last forty-two years the American Government had realised by the sale of waste lands in the different States of the Union no less than £17,000,000 sterling, and yet these States, so far from having been retarded in their growth by so large a price being exacted for the purchase of lands, had made unprecedented progress in population, wealth, and industry. As a contrast to this, our own North American colonies, where vast tracts of land had been alienated to a few individuals incapable of improving them, remained comparatively waste and desolate, and not only made no progress, but brought in no revenue to lay the foundation of a better state of things. In the United States of America, no less than 140,000,000 of acres belonging to the State had been surveyed and mapped at an expense of no less than £500,000; and for the information of intended purchasers, a general land-office was established at Washington, and forty subordinate ones in different parts of the Union.[2] The sum paid into the treasury since the

[2] Parl. Deb. xlviii. 1042, 1049; Ann. Reg. 1839, 232.

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1839.

system was introduced amounted to 84,000,000 dollars, by means of which the national debt had been paid off; and the annual sums paid into the treasury from this source, which in 1795 had been only 4836 dollars, had risen progressively, till in 1836 they amounted to 24,000,000 dollars.

11. Continued.

On the other hand, the adoption of the opposite system in most of the British colonies had been attended with the most disastrous results. In the case of the Swan River in Western Australia, no less than 500,000 acres were granted to Mr Peel, who took out £50,000 to cultivate it; and the Governor got 100,000 acres: but these huge grants remained desolate, for the labourers taken out, not being attached to the soil by the bonds of property, all dispersed, and the colony went to ruin. In New South Wales, since the system of selling land had been introduced in 1832, though the price asked was the very inadequate one of 5s. an acre, no less than £240,091 had been realised in four years, which was a security for £1,000,000 of an emigration fund. In Canada, the system of large grants had been the most serious of all bars to improvement, and was the great cause of the acknowledged inferiority at that period (1839) of those provinces to the United States. In Upper Canada, out of 17,653,000 acres surveyed, only 1,597,000 remained unappropriated; in Lower Canada, only 1,669,963 out of 6,169,000; and in Nova Scotia, only 250,000 out of 6,000,000. In Prince Edward's Island 1,400,000 acres had been alienated in one day, in blocks of from 20,000 to 150,000 acres each. Of all this immense territory the greater part remained waste and uncultivated; not one-tenth of the alienated land had been rendered profitable, while the opposite shores of America were teeming with towns, villages, and inhabitants. On the other hand, since the opposite system had been wisely adopted in 1831, by Lord Howick, in South Australia, the most gratifying results had taken place. No less than 124,738

acres had been alienated from 1831 to 1839, for a price of £124,499; and the inhabitants who already had gone out in five years were no less than 10,000 souls, at a cost of £18 a-head. Sir W. Molesworth at the same time mentioned the important fact, that the rapid progress of Australia was owing, not to the Government having provided the settlers with gratuitous lands, but "having furnished the combinable labour, which *gave value to the soil, by means of convict slaves* transported at the cost of the country, while the Government had further created an excellent market in the form of convict, civil, and military establishments for the manufactures of the country. They had granted away 7,000,000 acres, and transported in all 110,000 persons, of whom from 30,000 to 40,000 were now in private service." [1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xlviii. 1043, 1050; Ann. Reg. 1839, 235, 237.

12. New colonial system of England.

These valuable observations indicate the principles on which the new colonial administration of Great Britain has been founded, which, beyond all doubt, are in themselves just, and for introducing which the Whig Government, and in particular Lord Howick (now Earl Grey), who first reduced it to practice in 1831, deserve the highest credit. These principles are: 1. To alienate the crown lands only in moderate quantities to individuals, and at such prices as render the purchase of large tracts impossible by any one person; 2. Out of the price obtained for these lands to form a fund for the gratuitous removal of emigrants to aid in their cultivation; 3. To give to the local legislature of the colonies such extensive powers as to render them, to all practical ends, self-governed. The latter object, which has now, though after a considerable lapse of time, been attained, by granting constitutions on the most liberal principles to all the colonies, was absolutely indispensable after the Reform Bill passed, and alone has held the colonial empire together since that momentous epoch. As the destruction of the nomination boroughs, by which the colonies had been formerly represented without the admission of any

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1839.

direct representation into the imperial legislature, exposed the colonies without any shield to the rule of adverse interests in the heart of the empire, they must soon have broken off from British connection had they not been rendered practically self-governed, and thus retained in their allegiance by the firm and enduring bond of mutual interest.

13. First settlement of British colonists in New Zealand.

The year 1839 is remarkable as being the first in which a body of emigrants landed from the British shores to establish a settlement in NEW ZEALAND. In October of that year the "Tory" sailed from the Clyde with some hundred emigrants on board, bound for that distant and then almost unknown land. It was known to be intersected by lofty mountains, which gave promise of mineral riches, abounding in grassy vales, watered by pure and perennial streams, and blessed by a genial climate, equally removed from the snows of the arctic or the heats of the torrid zone. But it was known also to be inhabited by a race of savages who had acquired an unenviable celebrity all over the world as cannibals, and to whose real dangers imagination for long had added visionary terrors. It required no small courage in a small body of men to make more than half the circuit of the globe to settle in this distant and phantom-peopled realm; but the spirit of adventure indigenous in the Anglo-Saxon race, and which then existed in peculiar vigour in the British Islands, was equal to the undertaking; and the hardy emigrants, amidst the tears and prayers of their relations and friends, took their departure from the banks of the Clyde.[1]

[1] Personal knowledge.

14. Speech at Glasgow to the New Zealand emigrants.

Amidst the whirl of party politics and the struggle for political power, this event excited little attention in London. But it was otherwise in the provinces, where its importance was more clearly appreciated; and at a public dinner given in Glasgow to the emigrants previous to their departure, a gentleman present thus addressed the assembly: "Let us no longer strain after the impracticable attempt to disarm the commercial jealousy of

European states, but, boldly looking our situation in the face, direct our main efforts to the strengthening, consolidating, and increasing our colonial empire. There are to be found the bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; there the true descendants of the Anglo-Saxon race; there the people who, already imbued with our tastes, our habits, our artificial wants, must be chained for centuries to agricultural or pastoral employments, and can only obtain from the mother country the immense amount of manufacturing produce which their wealth and numbers must require. There is no one circumstance in the present condition of Great Britain—not even those which are justly considered as pregnant with danger and alarm—that may not be converted into a source of blessing, if a decided and manly course is taken by the nation and its Government in regard to its colonial interests. Indeed, so clearly does this appear, that one is almost tempted to believe that the manifold political and social evils of our present condition are the scourges intended by Providence to bring us back, by necessity and a sense of our own interests, to those great national duties from which we have so long and unaccountably swerved. Are we oppressed with a numerous and redundant population, and justly apprehensive that a mass of human beings, already consisting of twenty-five millions, and increasing at the rate of a thousand a-day, will ere long be unable to find employment within the narrow space of these islands? Let us turn to the colonies, and there we shall find boundless regions capable of maintaining ten times our present population in contentment and affluence, and which require only the surplus arms and mouths of the parent State to be converted into gigantic empires, which may, before a century has elapsed, overshadow the greatness even of European renown.

"Are we justly fearful that the increasing manufacturing skill and growing commercial jealousy of the

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1839. 15. Continued.

Continental states may gradually shut us out from the European market, and that our millions of manufacturers may find their sources of foreign subsistence fail at a time when all home employments are filled up? Let us turn to the colonies, and there we shall see empires of gigantic strength rapidly rising to maturity, in which manufacturing establishments cannot for a very long period take root, and in which the taste for British manufactures and the habits of British comfort are indelibly implanted in the British race. Are we overburdened with the weight and the multitude of our paupers, and trembling under the effect of the deep-rooted discontent produced in the attempt to withdraw public support from the starving but able-bodied labourers? Let us find the means of transporting these robust labourers to our colonial settlements, and we shall confer as great a blessing upon them as we shall give relief to the parent State. Are we disquieted by the rapid progress of corruption in our great towns, and the enormous mass of female profligacy which now infests those great marts of pleasure and opulence? Let us look to the colonies, and there we shall find states in which the great evil experienced is the undue preponderance of the male sex; and all that is wanting to right the principle of increase is the transfer of part of the female population which now encumbers the British Isles. Are the means to transport these numerous and indigent classes to those distant regions awanting? and has individual emigration hitherto been liable to the reproach that it removes the better class of citizens, who could do for themselves, and leaves the poorest a burden on the community? The British navy lies between; and means exist of transporting, at a trifling cost to the parent State, all that can be required of our working population from that part of the empire which they overburden, to that where they would prove a blessing.

"Powerful as these considerations are, drawn from

16. Continued.

private interest or public advantage, there are yet greater things than these; there are higher duties with which man is intrusted than those connected with kindred or country; and if their due discharge is to be ascertained by statistical details, it is those which measure the growth of moral and religious improvement rather than those which measure the increase of commerce and opulence. What said the Most High, in that auspicious moment when the eagle first sported in the returning sunbeam, when the dove brought back the olive-branch to a guilty and expiring world, and the 'robe of beams was woven in the sky which first spoke peace to man?' 'God shall increase Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.' God *has* multiplied Japhet, and well and nobly has he performed his destiny. After conquering in the Roman legions the ancient world, after humanising the barbarism of antiquity by the power of the Roman sway and the influence of the Roman law, the 'audax Japeti genus' has transmitted to modern times the far more glorious inheritance of European freedom. After having conquered in the British navy the empire of the seas, it has extended to the utmost verge of the earth the influence of humanised manners, and bequeathed to future ages the far more glorious inheritance of British colonisation. But mark the difference in the action of the descendants of Japhet—the European race—upon the fortunes of mankind, from the influence of that religion to which the Roman empire was only the mighty pioneer. The Roman legions conquered only by the sword; fire and bloodshed attended their steps. It was said by our own ancestors on the hills of Caledonia, that they gave peace only by establishing a solitude: 'Ubi solitudinem fecerunt pacem adpellant.'

17. Concluded.

"The British colonists now set out with the olive-branch, not the sword, in their hands—with the cross, not the eagle, on their banners; they bring not war and

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1839.

devastation, but peace and civilisation, around their banners, and the track of their chariot-wheels is followed, not by the sighs of a captive, but the blessings of a liberated world. 'He shall dwell,' says the prophecy, 'in the tents of Shem.' Till these times that prophecy has not been accomplished. The descendants of Shem—the Arabic race—still held the fairest portions of the earth, and the march of civilisation, like the path of the sun, has hitherto been from east to west. From the plains of Shinar to the isles of Greece, from the isles of Greece to the hills of Rome, from the hills of Rome to the shores of Britain, from the shores of Britain to the wilds of America, the march of civilisation has been steadily in one direction, and it has never reverted to the land of its birth. Is, then, this progress of civilisation destined to be perpetual? Is the tide of civilisation to roll only to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and is the sun of knowledge to set at last in the waves of the Pacific? No, the mighty day of four thousand years is drawing to its close; the sun of humanity has performed its destined course; but long ere its setting beams are extinguished in the West, its ascending rays have glittered on the isles of the Eastern seas. We stand on the verge of the great revolution of Time; the descendants of Japhet are about to dwell in the tents of Shem; civilisation is returning to the land of its birth; and another day and another race are beginning to shed their influence upon the human species. Already the British arms in India have given herald of its approach, and spread into the heart of Asia the terrors of the English name and the justice of the English rule. And now we see the race of Japhet setting out to people the isles of the Eastern seas, and the seeds of another Europe and a second England sown in the regions of the sun."[1]

[1] Speech of Mr Alison, Oct. 15, 1839; Collected Essays, iii. 472.

Less momentous in its ultimate consequences than this all-important subject of colonial emigration, but far more interesting at the time to the inhabitants of the dominant

islands, the topic of POST-OFFICE REFORM at this period awakened a large portion of public attention. Mr Rowland Hill was the principal author of the great change which was ere long adopted by Government, and he found a zealous coadjutor in Parliament in Mr Wallace of Kelly, the member for Greenock. His plan consisted in at once reducing the postage of all letters, which at that period were variously charged, for inland distance, from 2d. to 1s. 2d., to 1d. for every distance. The probable increase in the number of letters transmitted from this great reduction would, he contended, ere long compensate to the exchequer the consequences of the reduction of rates; and even if it should prove otherwise, the facilities given to mercantile communication, and the vast advantages of a great increase in friendly and domestic intercourse, were well worth purchasing at the cost of an inconsiderable diminution of revenue. It was truly said, that if Government were to lay a tax of sixpence on every person *speaking* to their children, the injustice of the tax would be so universally felt that it would not stand twenty-four hours; yet what difference is there when parents are prohibited from writing to their children, or children to their parents, unless they pay that tax in the shape of postage? That the postage of letters is too high, is decisively proved by the fact that, between the years 1815 and 1835, the Post-office revenue, instead of increasing, had remained stationary; whereas, from the mere augmentation of population, it should have increased £507,500. There was much force in these considerations; and such was the enthusiasm which they excited among the mercantile classes, and the pressure they exerted upon the legislature, that, after much opposition, the scheme was at length adopted by Government, by a bill introduced into the Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on July 5, 1839, which became law on 17th August thereafter. The majority for its adoption was no less than 102.[1] A fourpenny rate was at first adopted for a few

18. Post-office reform. Mr Hill's plan.

[1] Hill's Post-office Reform, 2; Parl. Deb. xlviii. 1365, xlix. 304; Ann. Reg. 1839, 287, 288.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

1840.

19. Results of the measure.

weeks; but the reduced rate of a penny for each half-ounce came into operation on the 10th January 1840.

Seventeen years have now elapsed since this great change was adopted, and experience has amply tested its results. In one point of view they have been satisfactory, in another the reverse. By a return presented to the House of Commons in 1849, it appeared that the number of letters had quadrupled since the introduction of the new system in 1840.* So far there is every reason for congratulation; for so great an increase in internal communication could not have taken place without a vast addition to human happiness, and no small strengthening of domestic love, the strongest safeguard of human virtue. But if the effects of this change upon the revenue are considered, and the ultimate results to the general taxation of the empire, a very different conclusion must be formed. The net revenue from the Post-office of the United Kingdom before the change was £1,648,000; and in 1850, after ten years' operation,† it was only £733,000—it having sunk the year after the

* LETTERS PASSING THROUGH THE POST-OFFICE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

1839, . .	81,460,516	1847, . .	322,146,241
1840, . .	168,768,244	1848, . .	328,829,185
1844, . .	242,091,685	1849, . .	337,065,167

—*Parl. Returns*, July 1850; and PORTER. p. 711.

† RETURNS AND CHARGES OF THE POST-OFFICE FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM.

Year ending 5th Jan.	Gross Receipt.	Expense of Management.	Net Revenue.	Real Net Revenue, inclusive of Charges on Government Departments.
1839	£2,467,215	£669,756	£1,676,522	...
1840	2,522,494	741,676	1,641,088	...
New System.				
1841	1,359,466	858,677	500,789	£410,028
1842	1,499,418	938,168	561,249	447,993
1843	1,578,145	977,104	600,641	478,479
1844	1,620,867	980,650	640,217	523,714
1845	1,705,067	985,110	719,957	610,720
1846	1,887,576	1,125,594	761,982	660,791
1847	1,923,857	1,138,745	825,112	724,757
1848	2,181,016	1,196,520	984,496	863,206
1849	2,143,679	1,403,250	740,429	624,526
1850	2,165,349	1,324,562	840,787	733,863

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, p. 714, 3d edit.

introduction of the change to £410,000, since which there has been a progressive advance. These figures appear in some degree to justify the expectations held out as to the increase in the number of letters posted coming at length to compensate the reduction in the rates of postage; but they prove to be altogether illusory, and to lead to a directly opposite conclusion, when a fact, carefully concealed by the Liberals, but which has since been extracted from Lord John Russell, in a debate on the navy estimates, is taken into consideration. This is, that when the penny postage was introduced, the whole expense of the packet service, which formerly had been borne by the Post-office, amounting to £784,000 a-year, *was thrown upon the navy.* If this large sum were replaced as a charge on the Post-office, which it should be to make the comparison fair, it would more than absorb the whole present surplus revenue derived from that establishment; so that, literally speaking, it is *not now self-supporting.* The reason is, that the expense of the establishment, even without the packet service, has been so much increased by the change; before 1850 it had doubled, having risen from £670,000 to £1,320,000, while the gross receipts had declined from £2,500,000 to £2,165,000. The failure of the scheme, in a financial point of view, appears still more clearly when it is recollected that the foreign and colonial postage, especially to America and the colonies, is still charged at the old heavy rates, though, to keep up the illusion, it forms part of the British penny-postage returns; and that a considerable addition has since the change been made to this branch of revenue, by making the Post-office the vehicle, which it was not before, for the cheap conveyance of books and parcels.[1]

[1] Porter's Progress of the Nation, 714, 715.

20. Causes of its failure as a source of revenue.

The truth is, that the penny postage has broken down, so far as raising any surplus received from this source is concerned, from a very obvious cause, and which, in recent times, has occasioned the ruin of many other branches of revenue, and is one main cause of the disappearance of

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1840.

the sinking-fund, and constant financial embarrassment in which the country has since been involved. This is, that the reduction, however expedient and proper to a certain extent, was carried much too far. It is the greatest possible mistake to assert, as is so often done by the cheapening party, that you can never lower duties too much, and that the only secure foundation for a large revenue is an evanescent taxation. Under such a system it will very soon disappear altogether. Had a 3d. or 2d. postage for all letters been introduced, it would have been hailed as a great boon by the nation, and would soon have yielded a surplus revenue, in the first case, of £1,500,000, in the last of £800,000 a-year; whereas, under the penny system, it in reality does not pay its own expense, if the packet-service expenses, the cost of which was formerly paid by the Post-office, are brought to its debit. The effects of this great mistake have been very serious, and are now, it is to be feared, irremediable. Coupled with the general failure of the revenue in other departments at this period from the monetary crisis, the great deficit of £1,500,000 a-year from the Post-office occasioned such a chasm in the revenue that a great effort to replace it became indispensable; and recourse was necessarily had to what Sir R. Peel had shortly before justly called "the dire scourge of direct taxation." This rash and excessive change in the Post-office is thus to be regarded as the parent of the income-tax, now imposed as a lasting burden on a small portion of the nation; and a part of the general system, since so extensively carried out, of taking the weight of direct taxation entirely off the shoulders of the dominant multitude, and laying it on a few hundred thousands of the community.

Another matter seriously occupied the attention of the House of Commons and Parliament in this year, arising out of the perhaps imprudent exercise of that unknown and ill-defined power, the privilege of Parliament. The origin of the dispute was this: In the year 1836, Lord

1840.

21. Stockdale's case, and the privilege of Parliament.

Chief-Justice Denman declared from the bench that the authority of the House of Commons could not justify the publication of a libel, while the house maintained that what was printed and published under the direction or by the authority of the house could not be questioned in any court of law, not even the highest. A committee of the House of Commons, to whom the matter was referred, reported to this effect on 30th May 1837, and the house resolved in the same terms, declaring any attempt to question this a violation of the privileges of Parliament.* Meanwhile Messrs Hansard, the parliamentary printers and publishers, had published in the parliamentary proceedings certain reports on prisons, in one of which a book, published by Messrs J. and J. Stockdale, found in a prison, was severely animadverted upon. Upon this Stockdale prosecuted the Hansards for libel, who in their turn pleaded the authority and privilege of Parliament. Lord Denman overruled the defence.† The Hansards declined to plead to the court as incompetent, and the result was that judgment went by default, and the damages were assessed at £600 by the jury in the sheriff court.[1] Stockdale pressed for instant execution, and the Sheriffs of London, Messrs William Evans and John Wheelton, having in vain petitioned for delay,

[1] 1 Parl. Deb. li. 101, lii. 190, 202, 303; Ann. Reg. 1840, 19-21.

* The resolutions of the House of Commons were as follows :—

"I. That the power of publishing such of its reports, proceedings, and votes as it shall deem necessary and conducive to the public interests is an essential incident to the constitutional freedom of Parliament, more especially of this house as the representative portion of it.

"II. That by the law and privileges of Parliament this house has the sole and exclusive jurisdiction to determine upon the existence and extent of its privileges, and that the institution or prosecution of any action, suit, or other proceedings, for the purpose of bringing them into discussion or decision before any court elsewhere than a Parliament, is a high breach of such privilege, and renders all parties concerned therein amenable to its just displeasure, and to the punishment consequent thereon."—Resolutions of the House of Commons, May 30, 1837 ; *Parl. Deb.* xlv. 981, and xlix. 1101.

† Lord Denman said, "I entirely disagree from the law laid down by the learned counsel for the defendants. My direction to you, subject to a question hereafter, is, that the fact of the House of Commons having directed Messrs Hansard to publish all their parliamentary reports is no justification for them, or for any bookseller who publishes a parliamentary report containing a libel against any man."—*Ann. Reg.* 1840, p. 17.

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1840.

were compelled to assess and levy the damages, which was done by an execution in the Hansards' premises, on 12th November.

22. Committal of the Sheriffs for breach of privilege. Jan. 17.

The Sheriffs, anxious to gain time in the hope that some mode of escaping the dilemma in which they were placed might be discovered, delayed, after the execution, paying the money to the Messrs Stockdale. Upon this the Court of Queen's Bench granted a rule calling on the Sheriffs to show cause why they did not pay the money to the Messrs Stockdale, and at the same time the House of Commons ordered them to the bar of the house to answer for breach of privilege in not paying back the money to the Messrs Hansard. The Sheriffs then could not avoid either commitment by the Court of Queen's Bench for disobedience of its orders, or by the House of Commons for breach of privilege. They preferred, like intrepid men, doing the duty to which they were sworn as executors of the law; and having appeared in their scarlet robes of office at the bar of the house, and declined saying anything in defence of their performance of their duty as officers of the Court of Queen's Bench, they were, on the motion of Lord John Russell, committed for contempt of court. When taken, under a writ of Habeas Corpus, a few days after, to the Court of Queen's Bench, they were loudly cheered in the Court, the whole bar standing; and while they remained in custody, they were visited by a large and not the least respectable portion of both houses of Parliament. The sensation in the country was very great, and the press generally applauded the courageous conduct of the officers who asserted the supremacy of law against what was almost universally considered an unconstitutional stretch of the House of Commons. They remained in custody till April 15, when they were discharged, by order of the house, in consequence of a bill having become law adjusting this delicate and painful matter in future.[1] *

Jan. 20.

[1] Parl. Deb. lii. 1026, liii. 288, 294, 1031, 1132; Ann. Reg. 1840, 20, 40, 57.

* Mr Sheriff Wheelton had been previously discharged on account of ill-health.—*Ann. Reg.* 1840, p. 46.

In this distressing collision between the legislature and the highest court of law in the kingdom, it would appear that the House of Commons was right in the main point for which they contended, and wrong in the mode of attaining it which they adopted. As freedom of debate is indispensable to a legislative assembly, so the same immunity must be extended to all its reports and proceedings; and if the house itself enjoys that privilege, it is impossible to hold that their publication can be made the foundation of punishment or damages; for of what value in a free community is free discussion in the legislature, if its publication is prevented to the country? On this account, without questioning the decision of the Queen's Bench in point of law, it may well be doubted whether it had either justice, reason, or expedience for its support. In the object for which they contended, therefore, the House of Commons was clearly in the right, and it was an object essential to the utility and due discharge of its functions by a legislative and deliberative assembly. But, on the other hand, they seem to have been equally wrong in the mode in which they attempted to enforce it, especially against the Sheriffs. The Court of Queen's Bench having determined that the privilege of Parliament was no defence against the publication of a libel, neither the plaintiff, in an action founded on such publication, nor the Sheriffs who carried the judgment for damages into execution, were the fit objects of the censure or punishment of the House of Commons.

23. Reflections on this subject.

In particular, to proceed against the Sheriffs, who merely did their duty as executors of the law they were sworn to obey, and for disobedience of which they were liable to commitment, was a stretch of power clearly contrary to justice, and which, it is to be hoped, will never be repeated. If any party was liable, it was Lord Denman and the judges of the Queen's Bench, who pronounced the judgment which the Sheriffs only executed as officers of the law. The remedy, without trenching on private right, was in their own hands, and consisted in yielding

24. Continued.

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1840.

obedience to the decision of the law in the mean time, and passing an act which should render such invasion of the privilege of Parliament impossible in future. This accordingly was done by an act brought in by Lord John Russell, which received the royal assent on 14th April 1840, whereby all actions founded on proceedings in Parliament printed by order of either House of Parliament, were protected from prosecution. This bill put the matter on its right footing, which, it is to be hoped, will never again be disturbed. And without imputing any improper or tyrannical motives to the majority in the House of Commons which supported Ministers in these proceedings, it may without hesitation be affirmed that their end was right, but their means were wrong, and that Mr Evans and Mr Wheelton, who, in such trying circumstances, asserted the supremacy of the law, deserve a place in the glorious pantheon of British patriots.

April 14, 1840.

25. Murder of Lord Norbury, and crime in Ireland. Jan. 1, 1839.

Ireland, during the years 1839 and 1840, remained in the same state, as to agrarian outrage, in which it had so long been, although, from the alliance which had now been contracted between the Romish leaders and the Government, it was no longer directed to political objects. The former began with an ominous event; for on the 1st January 1839, Lord Norbury was mortally wounded by the ball of an assassin, within sight almost of his own home, and not more than a few hundred yards from the churchyard of Durrow, where thirty or forty persons were attending a funeral, who, as usual, made no attempt either to arrest or pursue the criminal. The earl lingered till the 3d in extreme agony, when he expired, leaving behind him the regrets of every one who knew him, for a more kind-hearted benevolent man, both in private life and as a landlord, never existed. This tragic incident produced, as well it might, a great sensation throughout the United Kingdom, and led to motions for production of papers relative to Irish crime,[1] and animated debates in both Houses of Parliament on the subject,

[1] Ann. Reg. 1839, 38, 41.

which threw great light on the social state of that ill-starred country.

From the facts elicited in these debates, it appeared that agrarian outrages had considerably increased in the course of the years 1836 and 1837.* In 1836 and 1837, no less than 519 rewards for murders were published, but only nineteen were claimed. In 1836 the whole police of Ireland were put under the direction of the central office in Dublin; and the effects of this improved system appeared in a great increase in the number of convictions, both for serious crimes and minor offences; but the returns exhibited an awful picture of the extent to which violence and bloodshed had come to pervade the rural districts of the country. In 1825, the committals for serious crimes in all Ireland were 15,515;† in 1838 they had risen to 25,443, though the inhabit-

26. Statistics of Irish crime in 1837, '38, and '39.

* AGRARIAN OUTRAGES.

First six months of 1836,	843
Last six months, „	904
First six months of 1837,	1086

—*Ann. Reg.* 1839, p. 42.

† COMMITTALS FOR SERIOUS CRIMES IN IRELAND.

1825,	15,515	1833,	17,819
1826,	16,318	1834,	21,381
1827,	18,631	1835,	21,205
1828,	14,683	1836,	23,891
1829,	15,271	1837,	27,340
1830,	15,794	1838,	25,443
1831,	14,192	1839,	26,392
1832,	16,056	1840,	23,833

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, 668.

According to the returns of the Clerk of the Peace and Crown, the Police returns for the years 1836 and 1837 were 14,804 and 15,723 respectively, which was an obvious mistake, from the police, who in these years made the returns, then for the first time introduced, not understanding the English system. Lord Morpeth, in the debate on Irish crime in the House of Commons (*Parl. Deb.* xlvii. 322, 7th March 1839), quoted the Clerk of the Peace's returns as the true ones. The difference, which sorely perplexed the members of both houses who spoke on the subject, is easily explained without supposing inaccuracy in either return, and is quite apparent to any one practically acquainted with the subject. It arises from the different *class of cases* included in the returns, whether they include any of the summary convictions or not. The Irish police, in 1837 and 1838, *excluded* many of the committals reported by the Clerks of the Peace from *their* returns, from regarding them as police cases, though reported by the Clerks of the Peace as grave offences tried at the assizes, which was erroneous, contrary to the practice in England and Scotland, and avoided in subsequent years.

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1839.

ants, during the same period, had not increased more than a fifth. The convictions for minor offences had increased in a similar proportion, and at the close of the period still more rapidly; in the last eighteen months prior to December 1838, they were no less than 86,000!* But the most melancholy fact was one brought forward by Mr Stanley, that in the year 1838, in eleven counties of Ireland, exclusive of Tipperary, there were 277 committals for murder, and only three convictions! Among so many deplorable and melancholy facts, it was consolatory to find that there were some gleams of reviving prosperity, indicating what might be anticipated if a suitable system of government were permanently established in the country. The proportion of convictions to committals had steadily increased of late years, and came to be about 71 per cent of the whole—being nearly the same proportion as in England; and the price of land had risen in most counties from twenty to twenty-three, and even twenty-five years' purchase—being nearly as high as in England or Scotland.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1839, 45, 47, 81; Porter's Progress of the Nation, 668; Parl. Deb. xxxvi. 340, xxxix. 262, 263.

27. Alliance of the Government with O'Connell.

But though the rural districts were thus disturbed and stained with blood, the violence of the people was not directed against the Government, and this constituted an essential difference between the agitation at this time and what it had been on previous occasions. The *Precursor Association*, which had been set on foot by Mr O'Connell on the proclaiming down of the Catholic Association by the Lord-Lieutenant, had now, since the alliance of Lord Melbourne's Administration and the Roman Catholics, come to be entirely devoted to the support of Government, and was, in fact, their main-stay against the increasing hostility of the English county members. On March 6, 1839, Mr O'Connell said, at a meeting of the Precur-

* Summary Convictions.

July to December 1837, . . .	74,336
January to June 1838, . . .	74,539
June to December 1838, . . .	86,615

—*Ann. Reg.* 1839, p. 42.

sor Association in Dublin: "What am I here for? *To call upon all Ireland to rally round the Ministry*; to call for my 2,000,000 of Precursors; to call on the inhabitants of all the counties, towns, boroughs, cities, and villages in Ireland, to meet at once, and second me in my undertaking. Do not speak of that Irishman that does not become a Precursor. Let Sunday week be the day, and on that day let every parish meet and adopt petitions on the subject. We want no packed juries, no dishonest judges; we want only equality; refuse us this, and then, in the day of your weakness, dare to go to war with the most insignificant of the powers in Europe." And at a meeting held in the Theatre-Royal, Dublin, on April 11, with the Duke of Leinster in the chair, and all the Whig nobility in attendance, he said: "The shout that this day emanates from the Theatre will be heard in St Stephens', and it will cheer the heart of the Queen in St James's. Let her Majesty be menaced by the ferocious despots of the northern desert; let France, a country in which the king and the people seem affected with a periodical insanity, break her fetters again; but let her be governed as she has been by Normanby, and as she would be by Lord Fortescue, and if any hostile step dared to tread upon the Queen's dominions, the foe to the throne shall either surrender or be dashed into the sea."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1839, 61, 62.

28. Lord Normanby's wholesale liberation of offenders. Aug. 6.

The great circumstance which had rendered the government of Lord Normanby so popular with the populace in Ireland, was the wholesale liberation of criminals, which, in spite of all the complaints on the subject in the British Parliament, had continued throughout all his administration. The subject was brought under the notice of the House of Lords by Lord Brougham, in an eloquent speech, in which, amidst some of his habitual exaggeration, there was, it is to be feared, too much truth. He thus described the manner in which these jail-deliveries were conducted: "His Excellency came to a certain town, and was imme-

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1839.

diately attended by the populace to the jail. He entered the prison, a certain proportion of the prisoners were paraded before him, and those who were recommended by the jailer, often on the spot, were liberated without further inquiry. At Clonmell, lately, fifty-seven prisoners were drawn up in the yard, and received their pardon, while two hundred remained within the walls, who were not so exhibited; so that everything depended on the jailer, and the man who had been oftenest in jail would find most favour in his eyes. The wild bird would flap his wings against the cage, while that which had been hatched in slavery would never assail the wires with a feather of his pinions. Everywhere there was exhibited the same want of caution. In the summer of 1836, two hundred and forty prisoners were discharged by the Lord-Lieutenant by verbal orders, during a progress through part of Ireland. It is absolutely necessary to bring the matter before Parliament; for not only has it been sanctioned by a narrow majority of the House of Commons, but it has been approved by a letter written, the day after the last dissolution of Parliament, by Lord John Russell, then Home Secretary. If no step be taken, and that promptly, to express an opinion upon the true method in which the prerogative of the Crown is to be exercised in these high and paramount duties, you will again see many an instance of that which Ireland has so lately exhibited—of mercy, now no longer a solemn duty, but transformed into an empty pageant; a pageant which exhibits justice and mercy in altered places—mercy blessed while justice weeps." Lord Brougham's resolution, condemning Lord Normanby's administration in this particular, was carried by a majority of 34—the numbers being 86 to 52.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xlix. 1314, 1382; Ann. Reg. 1839, 90, 91; Report, 253, 256, 346, 461, 469.

It is humiliating to find that, in the midst of all these multiplied evils—social, economical, and administrative—under which Ireland laboured, the only remedy which the Government had to propose was the extension of the municipal franchise to every occupant of a subject worth

29. Reflections on the misery of Ireland, and the inadequacy of the remedies proposed.

five pounds a-year; and the only remedy of the Conservatives to raise it to ten pounds, at which it was finally fixed! Poor-laws to a certain extent had been already introduced—in 1837; but there was no attempt to establish railways or manufactures, to extend industry in any way in a country where the wages of labour were sixpence a-day, or to promote emigration in one where above two millions were in a state of pauperism! To bleed the plethoric patient was obviously the only remedy when he was labouring under apoplectic symptoms; but whenever anything of the kind was proposed in the House of Commons, the matter was adjourned till next session, or the House was counted out. The emigration during the years of intense suffering—from 1838 to 1842—was inconceivably small, when it is recollected what it has since become. In 1838 it was only 33,222 from the whole empire! Much of this unfortunate blindness is no doubt to be ascribed to the unfortunate dogma of the political economists, then so generally received, that emigration was worse than useless, because it only made those who remained at home increase the faster. "Our present radical evil," said Lord Jeffrey, "is the excess of our productive powers, the want of demand for our manufactures and industry, or, in other words, the excess of our population. And for this, I am afraid, there is no radical cure but *starving out the surplus*, horrible as it is. *Emigration can do comparatively nothing.*"[1] It is a curious commentary on these opinions, which for a quarter of a century entirely governed the country, that in ten years prior to 1856, no less than 2,080,000 emigrants left Ireland alone, and that in consequence the workhouses were deserted, and the wages of labour, for the first time in the memory of man, in the Emerald Isle, rose to a level with those in Great Britain.[2]

[1] Cockburn's Life of Jeffrey, ii. 189.

[2] Census Commissioners' Report, vi. 27, 42.

But much also of the extraordinary blindness of all parties to the real cause of the misery of Ireland is to be

CHAP. XXXVIII.

1839.

ascribed to the circumstance of its having become, from an unforeseen consequence of the Reform Bill, the great battle-field for the parties which contended for the mastery in the country. Ministers having come to depend on a majority of 15 to 20 in the House of Commons, composed entirely of Irish Roman Catholic members, it became vital to the one party to secure their support—to the other to diminish their numbers. Hence the battle of parties was fought in Ireland; and the main thing attended to in any measures relating to that country was, not the good of its inhabitants, or the alleviation of its suffering, but the adoption of measures which might gratify the Romish priesthood, and secure or extend their influence in the elections. The project to take £100,000 a-year from the Protestant Church, and to give every starving peasant worth £5 a-year a municipal vote, had not the slightest tendency to remove the real causes of Irish distress, but a very great one to secure the support of the Roman Catholic priesthood and their nominees in the House of Commons. Thus Ireland was worse than neglected—it was misunderstood; and though its concerns were continually brought before the legislature, they were so in relation to projects which, by endangering a fierce party-strife, and occasioning a prolonged struggle between the two houses of Parliament, rendered the nation every day more insensible to the only measures which could by possibility administer to it any relief.

30. Which mainly arose from Ireland being the battle-field of parties.

But pressing as the state of Ireland was, it and all other considerations yielded to a still more urgent matter, and that was the state of the FINANCES. Under the combined effect of five bad seasons in succession, and the contraction of the currency, which, under the existing system, was the inevitable result of the import of grain and export of gold which they occasioned, the revenue had declined to such a degree that all the efforts to effect retrenchment in every department made by the

31. Deplorable state of the finances.

Government—and they were great and many—had been unable to prevent a great and growing deficit. The national income, which in 1836 had been £48,591,000, had sunk in 1840 to £47,567,000; while the national expenditure, in spite of every effort at economy, had increased from £48,093,196 in the former, to £49,169,000 in the latter. In this state of matters, the desperate plunge in quest of popularity made by the Government in adopting the penny postage brought matters to a crisis; for it at once cut £1,780,000 off the revenue—viz., £1,000,000 in direct and admitted loss of income from the Post-office, and £780,000 additional charge imposed on the navy after the change, for the packet service. The result was, in 1841, a deficit of above £2,100,000; a state of things, in a period of Continental peace, so disastrous, that it struck universal consternation into the country.* Sir R. Peel, who had the best access to correct reports of income, stated the amount of the deficits, when he came into office in the end of 1841, for the five preceding years, at the enormous sum of £10,000,000 sterling.† This state of things was the more alarming

* Income and Expenditure of the Nation from 1836 to 1841.

Years.	Income.	Expenditure.
1836,	£48,591,180	£48,093,196
1837,	46,475,194	49,116,839
1838,	47,333,460	47,686,183
1839,	47,844,899	49,357,691
1840,	47,567,565	49,169,552
1841,	48,084,360	50,185,729

—Porter's *Progress of the Nation*, 3d edit., 475.

† Viz.:—

Years.	Deficiency in years ending January 5.	Ending April 5.
1838,	£655,760	£1,428,534
1839,	345,228	430,325
1840,	1,512,792	1,457,223
1841,	1,595,970	1,851,997
1842,	2,101,369	2,334,559
	£6,209,119	£7,502,638
Certain deficit in 1843,		2,570,000
		£10,072,638

—Sir R. Peel's *Statement*, March 8, 1842; *Parl. Deb.* Doubleday, ii. 343.

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1839.

that it was evident that the limits of indirect taxation had been reached; for the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, in May 1840, imposed 5 per cent additional on Customs and Excise, and 10 per cent on assessed taxes, and the result had been in the highest degree illustrative of the real state of the country, and causes of the embarrassments of the Treasury. For the estimated increase on the Customs and Excise was £1,895,000; whereas the actual increase was only £206,000—being, instead of 5 per cent, but little more than one half per cent; whereas the increase on the assessed taxes was £311,357, being 11¼ per cent—considerably more than had been expected. It was evident, therefore, that the limits of indirect taxation, for the time at least, had been reached, and that nothing remained, in Sir Robert Peel's words, but the "dire scourge of direct taxation."[1] *

[1] Doubleday, ii. 344; Parl. Deb. May 10, 1840; Ann. Reg. 1840, 136, 137.

32. Increased perils of the country in various quarters.

This state of things was the more alarming, that while the chief sources of revenue were thus visibly failing, or had reached their extreme limit, the public necessities, owing to the state of the national affairs in many parts of the world, loudly called for a great increase in the national armaments by sea and land. Affairs were so imminent in the Levant that a collision between the English and French fleets in that quarter might be hourly expected. Canada had recently before been in open rebellion; the West Indies were only hindered by weakness from following its example; a great and costly

* Produce of Customs and Excise, 1839, was . . £37,911,506
Estimated produce of increase of 5 per cent, . 1,895,575

£39,807,081
Actual produce, ... 38,118,221

Real increase, . £206,715
Being, not 5 per cent, but little more than ¼ per cent.

Assessed taxes, 1840, ... £2,758,590
Produce of the same, 1841, ... 3,069,947

£311,357
Being 11¼ per cent—not 10 per cent, as expected.
—*Ann. Reg.* 1840, 136; DOUBLEDAY, ii. 344.

war, fraught with imminent danger, had been waged in Affghanistan; hostilities was going on on a great scale with the Chinese empire; and at home an insurrection from the Chartists had recently taken place, and was again threatened. On all sides the Government was assailed with applications for ships, men, and money; yet where to find them, with a growing deficit in the revenue, which had come now to exceed two millions a-year, and in a country where the limits of indirect taxation had evidently been reached, seemed an impossibility.

33. Injustice of the general opinion on the subject.

The country distinctly perceived their perilous circumstances, and they generally ascribed them to the imbecility and want of business habits in the Government, which was almost entirely composed of the Whig nobility. The opinion, in consequence, had become general in all ranks, excepting their own immediate dependants, that an entire change of government had become necessary to face the public necessities, that the administration of public affairs by a few Whig families was out of date, and that a large infusion of the commercial interests of the country into the Cabinet had become indispensable. The opinion, in particular, was all but universal, that they were especially deficient in knowledge of finances, and that to that the deplorable state of the Exchequer was to be ascribed. There can be no doubt that there was much injustice in these judgments. The Whig Ministry was by no means responsible for the disastrous state of the finances—at least, not in a greater degree than their opponents had been. They had carried retrenchment and reduction of the national armaments by sea and land to the most extreme point, and increased neither till the public necessities rendered it absolutely indispensable. They had given in, it is true, to the desperate plunge of the penny postage; but in so doing the House of Commons had cordially supported them, and the magnitude of the general distress probably at that period

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1839.

rendered some alleviating measure indispensable. The true cause of the penury of the Exchequer, as of the suffering of the nation, was the establishment of a monetary system entirely dependent on the retention of gold, which, in seasons of scarcity, it was impossible to retain; but that, though by far the greatest mistake of the age, and the parent of boundless disasters, was not in a peculiar manner the fault of the Government, but was shared with them by the greater part of the House of Commons and a decided majority of the Conservative Opposition.

34. Slight increase of the army in 1839.

The alarming state of the country after the riots at Birmingham and Newport, and the incessant demands for additional troops to Canada, the West Indies, and India, from the important events of which they had become the theatre, led the Government to propose a slight increase of 5000 men to the military force of the country, by raising the strength of each regiment of infantry from 739 to 800 men. Small as this addition was, and evident as was the necessity under which it was proposed, it was strongly opposed by Mr Hume and the Radical party. The effect of this vote was to raise the military force of the country, including India, to 109,818, of whom 27,000 were charged on the revenues of the latter country, leaving 82,000 to be provided for by Great Britain. This force was, in 1840, increased to 121,112 men, of whom 28,213 were employed in India, and charged on its finances, leaving 92,899 for whose maintenance the country at home was to provide. Mr Hume strongly objected to this increase, and moved that it should be reduced to 81,319 men; but the larger number was carried by a majority of 92, the numbers being 100 to 8.[1]

March 9, 1840.

1 Parl. Deb. lii. 1086, 1100; Ann. Reg. 1839, 282.

35. Extreme weakness of the navy.

Small as this force was for a country involved in a desperate conflict in India and China, and threatened with an immediate rupture with France, which had 300,000 disposable men under arms, the state of the navy at the same

period was still more alarming. Lord Colchester brought this important subject under the notice of the house on 6th February 1840, and, referring to the Admiralty reports just published, he stated that our whole force on the home station consisted of three guard-ships, manned by a third of their complement, and therefore incapable of putting to sea; *one frigate of* 36 *guns, and some schooners.* There were two sail of the line at Lisbon, twelve in the Mediterranean, and one or two in other quarters of the globe—in all only twenty. On the other hand, the official reports proved that the Russians had 28 sail of the line, 18 frigates, and 39 smaller vessels, carrying in all 3672 guns and 30,087 men, in the Baltic, and 13 sail of the line, 11 frigates, and 17 smaller vessels in the Black Sea, carrying 1956 guns and 14,300 men. France at the same period had 34,000 seamen in the royal service, being only 1000 less than the number in this country, and 40 sail of the line ready for sea, of which 20 were afloat and fully manned, besides 12 frigates, 20 steamers, and 90 smaller vessels. Thus France, which had no colonial dependency except Algiers, had as large a naval force as Great Britain, whose fleets were necessarily scattered over the globe, in defence of her immense colonial possessions. Lord Minto, the First Lord of the Admiralty, admitted, in his place in Parliament, "that we had *not ships enough in commission to cope with the whole Russian fleet,* if that fleet were also in commission, and prepared to take the seas against us; but it was not necessary that we should be in such a situation at this moment." What rendered this state of things peculiarly alarming was, that the naval establishment, in every one particular, was less at this time than it had been in 1792, when the population was not a half, nor its resources a fourth, of what they had since become, while our colonial dependencies, requiring defence in every quarter of the globe, had more than doubled since the former period; and so far from being at peace, we were

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1840.

engaged in a serious war with the greatest power in Asia, and on the verge of one with the greatest in Europe. It has been truly said, that on looking back to the extraordinary infatuation of these times, and the enormous perils with which it was attended, we feel as if reflecting on the movements of a somnambulist on the edge of a precipice, whom a single false step might at any moment have precipitated into the abyss.[1]*

[1] Parl. Deb. li. 1279, 1314.

36. Outcry for the abolition of the Corn Laws.

Serious as these considerations were, and pregnant, to the prophetic eye, with disaster in future times, they were, in those days of pacific occupation and severe distress, less generally interesting than such topics as promised, however remotely, relief to the universal suffering. Of these agitations, the cry for the abolition of the Corn Laws had now become the loudest and most threatening, both from the quarters in which it was heard and the privations in which it originated. It is very evident now to what cause the extreme vehemence of the outcry on this subject had been owing. It arose from the extraordinary

* Comparative State of the Navy, Population, Exports, and Imports of Great Britain in 1792 and 1838 respectively.

I.—Navy.

Years.	Line in Commission.	Ordinary and Building.	Frigates in Commission.	Frigates Building.	Total Line.	Total Frigates.	Total.
1792	26	124	52	63	153	115	411
1838	21	70	9	84	91	93	363

II.—National Resources.

Years.	Population of Great Britain and Ireland.	Exports. Official Value.	Imports. Official Value.	Shipping. Tons.
1792	12,680,000	£24,904,000	£19,659,358	1,540,145
1838	27,200,000	105,170,549	61,268,320	2,785,367

—James's *Naval History*, ii. 404; Barrow's *Anson*, App. 424; Porter's *Parl. Tables for* 1838.

and heretofore unprecedented combination of extremely high prices of provisions of all sorts, in consequence of four bad seasons having succeeded each other without intermission, with ruinously low wages of labour in consequence of the contraction of the currency, and stoppage of credit originating with a monetary system dependent on the retention of gold, in the drain of the precious metals occasioned by the consequent import of foreign grain. It may safely be affirmed that this extraordinary combination produced an amount of distress which never before had been witnessed in British, or even in modern history; and it was decisively proved by the extraordinary fact already mentioned, that *one-seventh* of the entire population of the two islands had become paupers. It fell with much more severity on the urban and manufacturing than the rural and agricultural population; for to the former the high price of necessaries was in some degree compensated by the high price of agricultural produce, but to the latter it was aggravated by the low price of manufactures. The people in towns saw this, and writhed under its severity; but they were ignorant of the cause to which it was owing, and lent a willing ear to the agitators, who ascribed it all, not to the monetary system, but to the monopoly of grain, which was enriching the landlords and farmers in the midst of the general ruin. The suffering being universal among the working classes in the towns and manufacturing districts, and the remedy proposed for it in the free importation of foreign grain such as was on a level with every capacity, it obtained universal credit among these classes, and being skilfully improved by Cobden, Bright, and the whole orators of the Anti-Corn-Law League, became so powerful as to portend important changes in the commercial policy of the nation at no distant period.

Encouraged by these favourable appearances, Mr Villiers, on 7th February 1839, brought forward a motion to take evidence on the operation of the Corn Laws. But

CHAP. XXXVIII.

1839.

37. Mr Villiers' motion for the repeal of the Corn Laws lost.

the attempt was premature; the landed influence of the great Whig magnates who formed the Cabinet was not sufficiently weakened to admit of such a concession to the commercial interests, and the motion was resisted by the Ministers. Such as it was, however, the result of the motion evinced the indecision of Government on the subject, and was hailed by the Anti-Corn-Law League as the harbinger of coming triumphs. Lord John Russell had declared to his constituents at Stroud that the Corn Laws were indefensible on principle, and that the time had come for a change; but in answer to Mr Villiers in the House, he said, "The impression on my mind is, that it is my duty to oppose the motion to hear evidence at the bar. I have not as yet found sufficient precedents to induce me to adopt such a course. At the same time, as there will be a great deal of discussion relating to facts, when a mode is proposed by which these facts can be ascertained which is conformable to precedent, and not inconvenient to the house, I shall be willing, though not ready to propose it myself, to support such an inquiry." The whole Cabinet, with the exception of Mr Poulett Thomson, including Lord John Russell, Lord Palmerston, Lord Howick, and Mr Spring Rice, voted against inquiry. The motion was negatived by a majority of 181; the numbers being 361 to 172. So strongly intrenched were the Corn Laws in the legislature on the very eve of their fall. In the House of Peers a similar motion was negatived without a division, Lord Melbourne declaring that "the repeal of the Corn Laws would be the *most insane proposition that ever entered into the human head.*"[1]

Feb. 18, 1839.

[1] Parl. Deb. xlv. 156, 691.

38. Increased agitation on the subject.

The Anti-Corn-Law delegates were rather encouraged than the reverse by this result, and the general excitement on the subject was much increased by what had passed in Parliament, and the evident division in the Cabinet on the subject. "There was no cause for despondence; they were the representatives of three millions of

people; they were the evidence that the great towns had banded themselves together; and their alliance would be a Hanseatic League against their feudal Corn-Law plunderers. The castles which crowned the rocks along the Rhine, the Danube, and the Elbe, had once been the stronghold of feudal oppression, but they had been dismantled by a league, and they now only adorned the landscape as picturesque memorials of the past, while the people below had lost all fear of plunder, and tilled their vineyards in peace."[1] The delegates left, but only to meet again in Manchester, when fresh modes of agitation were devised, whereby it was to be carried into every village and hamlet of the realm. The "Anti-Corn-Law Rhymes" made their appearance at this period, and by expressing exactly the feeling of the urban multitude on the subject, soon acquired great popularity, and powerfully contributed to advance the cause. There was much ability in many of the publications issued, and thorough knowledge of the means of moving the multitude in the practical leaders by whom they were directed; but the great cause of the rapid progress and ultimate success of the movement was the coincidence of high prices of provisions, the result of five bad seasons in succession, with low prices of manufacturing produce, the result of the consequent contraction of the currency—a state of things so anomalous and distressing to the inhabitants of towns that it rendered them ready to embrace with ardour any project which held out the prospect even of bringing it to a termination.

[1] Spectator, 1839, 178.

39. Attack on the Queen.

It is the ordinary effect of such periods of general and long-continued distress, to engender a feeling of irritation at those in authority, which often leads to attempts at assassination. The great and affluent can in reality do nothing so well calculated to assuage the public distress, so far as their means go, as engaging in festivities which occasion an expenditure of money, for it is the want of

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1840.

such expenditure which occasions the worst part of the distress. It is grating to the feelings, however, to see one class revelling in luxury while another is pining in indigence, and reflection on the beneficial effects of the expenditure comes only to those who immediately experience its benefits. The Queen's popularity from this cause, and from no error on the part of her Majesty, sensibly declined in the melancholy years 1839 and 1840; and the sore feeling in the last of these years appeared in attempts at assassination, which, though unconnected with any political association, and the acts of isolated individuals, were suggested by the general soreness and irritation which pervaded the public mind. The first of these was the act of a wrong-headed youth named Oxford, who, on 10th June 1840, fired two loaded pistols at the Queen as she was ascending Constitution Hill in the Park, in her phaeton. Happily neither shot took effect; the criminal was immediately seized; and by the mistaken lenity of the authorities, instead of being hanged, he was considered a lunatic, and sentenced to confinement in an asylum for life. He himself afterwards said, if he had been hanged, there would have been no more firing at the Queen; but instead of meeting with his deserts, he became a hero with the fine ladies of London, "even members of Parliament applying for locks of his hair." The consequence was, that several other half-crazy youths, desirous of notoriety, sought it by further attempts, or feigned attempts, to assassinate her Majesty, until the abominable practice was stopped by an Act passed in 1841, which declared any such attempts punishable, in addition to transportation, by *three private whippings in jail.* This was a disagreeable result of a longing for notoriety, and accordingly it put an effectual stop to these disgraceful acts.[1] Yet how alarming soever, while they continued they were attended with this good effect, that on every occasion on which they occurred they drew forth

[1] Ann. Reg. 1840, 245; Law Cases; Mart. ii. 417.

expressions of the loyalty of the people and the personal courage and humanity of the Sovereign.

1841.

The session of 1841, which was opened by the Queen in person on 26th January, took place amidst the general conviction that the Whig Ministry could not get through it. The balance of parties had been so even during the preceding session of Parliament, that it had been barren of legislative results. Nothing of real importance was either proposed or thought of, and Government seemed to cling to office rather from the instinctive desire of Britons not to be beaten, or a chivalrous feeling of devotion towards the Sovereign, than from any real sense that they had strength enough to discharge the duties of Government. The penny postage had given universal satisfaction, as every remission of taxation *generally felt* never fails to do; but it had made an alarming chasm of £1,700,000 a-year in the revenue, and brought up the deficit to £2,500,000, which Government apparently had not the means of replacing. Indirect taxes on articles of luxury consumed had been found by experience to have reached its limit; any increase had ceased to be productive. If attempted, it would at once raise such a storm among the urban consumers as would prove fatal to any administration. Direct taxation still remained, but it had been pronounced by Sir R. Peel to be a "dire scourge," and it was more than doubtful whether his whole party, three hundred strong, would not at once resist any attempt to introduce it. An universal feeling in consequence had come to pervade the community, that an entire change of Administration had become indispensable; the Tories openly exulted at the prospect of a speedy accession to power, and even their cautious leader did not hesitate to affirm on several occasions, that a united party, led by three hundred independent members of Parliament, could not long remain excluded from office.[1]

40. Extreme difficulties of Ministers.

[1] Doubleday, ii. 296-298; Mart. ii. 436; Ann. Reg. 1841, 5-7.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

1841.

41. New Reform Bill for Ireland, and its fate.

Such was the weakness of Ministers that they were obliged to temporise with various measures which they had very recently denounced in the most unmeasured terms. Lord Melbourne had declared in Parliament that the project of repealing the Union was little better than high treason, and the idea of repealing the Corn Laws absolute insanity; but with both measures Ministers, to avoid ruin, were obliged to temporise. To conciliate O'Connell and the Irish Catholic members, who composed the majority which retained them in power, they brought forward a bill for the registration of voters in Ireland, the purport of which was, under the name of a mere regulation, to introduce a new Reform Bill, greatly extending the constituency, by making a rating at *five pounds* to the poor-rate confer the parliamentary suffrage. This was in effect a new Reform Bill *reducing the suffrage one half*, and as such it threatened the most dangerous consequences, especially in a country agitated by the cry for repeal of the Union. Accordingly it was resisted by Sir R. Peel with the whole strength of the Conservative party. The result was, that it was carried in the Commons only by a majority of *five*, the numbers being 299 to 294. This small majority was justly considered as fatal to the bill; and the final fate of the measure proved that it was scarcely less so to the Administration. In committee, Ministers were obliged to agree to an amendment proposed by Lord Howick which raised the qualification to £8, "a change which," Sir R. Peel observed, "disentitled them to the confidence of the house or the country." In effect, Ministers lost credit essentially by the conduct pursued in regard to this bill with both parties—with the one side of the house by bringing it in, with the other for substantially abandoning it when introduced.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1841, 54-59; Doubleday, ii. 302, 303; Parl. Deb. lvii. 1072, 1223.

It was now evident to all the world that the Whig Ministry were doomed, and that it was only a question

of time when their tenure of office should come to an end. As a last resource, Lord John Russell gave notice that on the 31st May he would move for a committee of the whole house to consider the acts of Parliament relating to the importation of grain—the very thing which, in the preceding session, he had opposed, and which Lord Melbourne had declared to be the greatest insanity which could enter into the human head. The discussion of this motion, however, and the development of the grounds on which it was now to be supported by Government, was prevented by the turn which Parliament took before the day originally fixed for its discussion came on. The state of the finances had become so pressing, from the serious chasm occasioned by the penny postage and the decline of several branches of the revenue from the general distress, that it was indispensable, at all hazards, to make an attempt to fill it up. Yet was this no easy matter; for how ready soever all parties might be to repeal taxes, it was more than doubtful whether any of them would consent to lay them on again. At the same time, any increase to the direct taxes was sure to be to the last degree unpopular, and resisted with the utmost obstinacy, especially by the Conservative party. Pressed by so many difficulties, the Government endeavoured to steer a middle course, which, as usual in such cases, displeased all parties and conciliated none. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in opening the budget, admitted that the deficit for the ensuing year would amount to £2,421,000; and this deficit he proposed to make up by reverting to the principles of the former Whig budget which had been so unceremoniously disposed of in 1831. His proposal was to *raise* the duty on colonial timber from 10s. to 20s. a load, and *reduce* that on Baltic timber from 55s. a load to 50s.; and to leave the duty on colonial sugar at its present amount of 24s. a cwt., but to *lower* the duty on foreign sugar from 63s. to 36s. From

42. The Whig budget. May 18, 1841.

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1841.

these sources, owing to the increased consumption, he calculated on an increase of revenue to the extent of £1,300,000. The balance of the deficiency was to be made up by a *fixed duty of* 8*s. a quarter on foreign wheat;* rye, 5s.; barley, 4s. 6d.; and oats, 3s. 6d.—while the deficiency of £1,800,000 in the last year was to be provided for by the issue of exchequer bills to the extent of £800,000, and appropriating, on the responsibility of Government, £750,000 invested in the public securities in the name of the trustees of savings' banks.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lvii. 1295, 1307; Ann. Reg. 1841, 90, 93, 97.

43. Which is lost on a division. May 10, 1841.

It may well be conceived what a sensation the announcement of this budget, so eminently favourable to foreign and injurious to domestic industry, produced in the House and the country. The interests thus threatened were too strong, and had too long been protected by the legislature, to yield without a violent struggle. It began, accordingly, the moment the budget was announced, and soon convulsed the country from end to end. The West India merchants and proprietors met in London, Liverpool, and Glasgow; the Canadian timber merchants, in Bristol and Liverpool; the landed interest, in their several county towns. Universally the budget was condemned in the most unmeasured terms; and such was the clamour raised that before the vote was taken it was evident that Ministers would be in a minority. Yet was the result even more decisive than had been anticipated; for on a division on the proposed reduction of the duties on sugar, which was first taken after the debate had lasted eight nights, they were left in a minority of 36, the numbers being 317 to 281.[2]

[2] Parl. Deb. lviii. 667; Ann. Reg. 1841, 107, 115.

The arguments on this all-important question, being the same as those of which a summary will be given in the great debate on Free Trade in a subsequent chapter, need not be here recapitulated. But some observations

which fell from the Conservative leaders, who both then and afterwards took so important a part in that question, deserve to be recorded. Sir R. Peel said: "Even though no questions of timber or corn had been mixed with that of sugar, I would have voted against the introduction of slave-grown sugar into the English market, not upon the abstract ground that conscience would forbid all commerce in the produce of slave labour, but upon a consideration of the social and moral condition of the West India people under the experiment now in progress. If the personal interests of the planters alone were taken into consideration, the house might possibly expect them to sacrifice those interests to the public advantage. But much higher interests were at stake in the moral and social condition of the people in that part of the empire where we had recently made the most hazardous, and, I rejoice to admit, the most successful experiment in the annals of the world. But it is impossible to foretell what may be the consequences of that step, if we take the new step of introducing sugar made by slave labour into the market of this country. A sufficient quantity of sugar for home consumption may be obtained from the East and West Indies and the Mauritius, without resorting to the slave colonies. New articles of remittance should be encouraged from India, for its inhabitants have suffered severely from the unrestricted admission of English manufactures. . . . After such fearful examples, I am unable to perceive the paramount obligations of those *free-trade doctrines* which now demand a preference to the slave labour of Cuba and Brazil over the free industry of the East Indies. The great experiment of the extinction of slavery should be fully and fairly tried; but this can never be done unless we give the free labour of our own colonies the exclusive preference over the slave establishments of other states."

44. Sir R. Peel's argument against the budget.

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1841.

45. Continued.

"The principle of Free Trade announced on the other side is, that, without reference to any other considerations, we should go to the cheapest market. If that is to be acted upon as a universal rule, without reference to time and circumstances, I can only say *I cannot concur in it.* Without contesting the principle in reference to countries—if it were possible to conceive such—in which no previous relations existed, in a country of such complicated relations as this, of such extensive empire and immense trade, the rigid application of such a principle would *involve us in inextricable confusion.* Consistently with this principle, we should go to the cheapest market for corn and timber, and every other commodity. How is this reconcilable with the duty of 8s. a quarter, still proposed to be levied on imported wheat, and 20s. a load on imported foreign timber? The propriety of the change on the timber duties cannot be judged of till the details are furnished from Canada. The principles I now maintain are those of Mr Huskisson, and on which I and my colleagues, when in office, have always proceeded.*

46. Continued.

"Notwithstanding the forcible combination which has been formed against the Corn Laws—notwithstanding the declarations, that either the total repeal or the substitution of a fixed duty for the present scale is the inevitable result of the agitation which is now going forward—I do not hesitate to adhere to the opinion which I expressed last year, and now again declare, that my preference is decidedly in favour of a graduated scale to any fixed duty. I prefer the principle

* Mr Huskisson said in 1828: "An honourable gentleman had spoken in favour of a fixed duty on grain: abstractly that might look well in theory; but when we regard the circumstances of the country and the wants of the people, we must see the impossibility of adopting such a principle. If a high permanent duty were imposed, then in seasons of scarcity the poor would be exposed to sufferings, the infliction of which no claim to protection on the part of the corn-growers would ever justify. I said in 1815, and I say again, that *nothing can be more dangerous than a reliance of this country on foreign nations for food.*"—*Parl. Deb.* xlviii. 635.

of a graduated sliding duty to a fixed one. I do not pledge myself to any rigid details; I reserve to myself the opportunity of considering them. I bind myself to the principle of a graduated scale in preference to a fixed one, but not to any details. The noble lord will propose the adoption of a fixed duty: I will offer my opposition to it on the ground that it cannot be permanent; it must be abandoned under the pressure of general distress in seasons of scarcity.

"Government talk of a great commercial crisis; they are themselves mainly responsible for it. They have come down to the house year after year complaining of a deficiency, and now they boast themselves the martyrs of Free Trade, and apply to me for a budget. I am by no means surprised at the confidence of your opponents to do what you have shown you yourselves cannot do. During the period when the Administration of which I formed a part had held office, they had reduced the public debt by £20,000,000, and the annual charge upon that debt by above £1,000,000, and yet they left a clear surplus of income above expenditure of £1,600,000 when they went out of office in 1830. What has come of that surplus now? It has turned, on your own showing, into a deficit of £2,400,000. And this has happened when we were impeded by all the difficulties of an unreformed Parliament, and you have had all the advantages of a reformed one—when you have had your own way for eleven years, during which you have enjoyed all the advantages of cheap government. This evil has occurred, not from any particular cause, but from general mismanagement—from the circumstance of Ministers clinging to office when they no longer enjoyed the confidence of this house or the country, and were unable to carry through the measures which they deem essential to the public good of the country. It is not for the interest of representative government and constitutional monarchy that such a system should con-

47. Concluded.

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1841.

tinue; Ministers, in so retaining power, are violating the first principles of the constitution which they gave me credit for yielding to in 1835. Even measures in themselves beneficial lose their good effects by being brought forward by a party holding office under such circumstances. They are looked upon, not as springing from the deliberate will of its leaders—not in consequence of the settled convictions of their minds,—but merely for the purpose of propping up a falling cause, and conciliating the good-will of a particular party to whose support it looks. I will not be tempted to fall into the snare laid for me; I will not offer my budget in competition with yours; my vote this evening is *upon a question of confidence.*"[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lviii. 615, 639; Ann. Reg. 1841, 108-111.

48. Lord Palmerston's reply.

To these powerful and sarcastic observations it was replied by Lord Palmerston: "The question which is this night before the house, which should be answered openly and explicitly, is, When a deficiency exists, do you approve of making it up in the way which we intend, or do you propose to lay on new taxes? The right honourable baronet has not done this; he has objected to our proposed duties on sugar, timber, and corn, but he has not told us what he would substitute in their room. And yet that some additional imposts must be laid on is self-evident; and where shall we find any to which objections equally plausible may not be stated? The question to be decided to-night is not a question of confidence; it is the adoption or rejection of a great principle; that principle is Free Trade, the opposite principle is Monopoly. The Opposition have shrunk from grappling with this great issue, and endeavoured, instead, to narrow the discussion to one collateral point, and to mislead the house and the country by pretending an unbounded zeal for the negroes. I distrust the sincerity of this newborn anxiety on the part of those who have so long been a party to the sufferings of these very negroes. We decline to take slave-grown sugar ourselves on pretence of humanity, but we do

not hesitate to assist the slave-owners by transporting their produce to other countries, or refining it. Is not the pretence of conscience, under these circumstances, a gross hypocrisy? The true, the only way to exterminate the slave-trade is, to increase the vigilance and activity of our own cruisers, and the stringency of our treaties with foreign governments, to effect its abolition. Were we to assert, as the Opposition now do, that free labour cannot compete with slave labour, we should be supplying the advocates of slavery with the best of all arguments against their complying with our demand for the abolition of the slave-trade, and falsifying all that we had said as to the advantages of freedom.

49. Continued.

"The proposed budget retains duties on foreign produce solely for the purposes of revenue. We do not wish to see the principles of Free Trade suddenly and universally applied, to the derangement of established interests, and the ruin of great numbers of individuals; we desire only to go on as quickly as circumstances will admit. All must admit that it is for the interest of Great Britain to extend our foreign exports; but how is this to be done if, by prohibiting duties, we virtually exclude theirs in return? It will not do to urge a more liberal commercial policy on foreign nations, telling them that competition is the light and life of trade, while we keep up our own restrictive system at home. It is our doing so which has so long deterred other nations from adopting a more liberal commercial policy. This is, in particular, the case with Germany, France, Belgium, Sweden, Russia, Mexico, and the United States. Foreign countries listen with polite incredulity to our representations, and point from our theories, pressed upon them, to our practice embraced by ourselves. It is difficult to see what reply can be made, under our present restrictive system, to such answers.

"Protection, in the sense in which it is now used by those who oppose the plan of Government, is a tax levied

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1841. 50. Continued.

upon the industry and skill of the mass of the community, to enable a few to remain indolent and unskilful. Such protection is not only erroneous in principle, but utterly useless to those for whose particular benefit it is maintained. Show me a trade that is free, by which I mean open to fair competition, and I will show you a trade carried on with intelligence, enterprise, and success. Show me a trade that is highly protected, and I will show you a set of men, supine, unimproving, and probably labouring under perpetual embarrassment. But the evil does not stop here. Not only does this excessive protection paralyse the very interests it is intended to invigorate, but it operates most injuriously upon the country in relation to our commercial intercourse with foreign nations. For protection is a game which two can play at. It is impossible that a great country like England should go on protecting, as it is called, its various interests, and that other nations should not follow our example. They have all accordingly done or are doing so. The Commercial Union of Northern Germany, which is in reality a protective union, has just renewed itself by treaty from 1842. Russia and Sweden are doing the same. France, which ought to be the great market for our commodities, being so populous and so near us, has a tariff which excludes the greater portion of our manufactures. The United States and Mexico have the same. When we preach to these foreign nations the absurdity of such practices, they reply: It is all very well; but we observe that England has grown wealthy and great by these means, and it is only now, when other nations are following her example, that she has discovered that this system is an absurd one: when we shall have attained the same pitch of commercial prosperity which England has reached, it will then be time enough to abandon a system which perhaps then may no longer be necessary. It is in vain to tell them that England has grown great and prosperous, not in consequence of the protective system,

but in spite of it. Till we prove by our practice that we are serious in our doctrines, neither France nor Belgium, nor any other country, will relax their prohibitory laws.

51. Continued.

"Symptoms of the most dangerous kind are already visible in our trade, the consequences of the protective system, which may well arrest the attention of the nation. Every year a smaller portion of those manufactures consists of articles in the making of which much labour and skill are employed. Every year a greater proportion of our exports consists of articles of an *elementary nature*, which are not destined for inward consumption, but are to serve as materials to the foreign manufacturers. For instance, the exportation of cotton goods does not increase in the same proportion as the exportation of cotton yarn. Our artisans and capitalists are leaving the country. Every year the protective system is rising up against us, raising in other parts of the world manufacturing competitors, and every year British skill and capital are transferring themselves abroad, to render the competition of foreign countries more and more formidable. We are thus ourselves assisting to exclude our own commerce from the markets of other countries. If this system is persevered in, we shall at last come to that spendthrift industry which is to consist in exporting machinery as well as the elements of manufactures; and when our exports consist of capital, skill, machinery, and materials, we shall no doubt see how it happens that we are no longer able to compete with other nations in the markets of the world.

52. Concluded.

"These, then, are the principles on which we stand; our plan is simple, plain, and intelligible. The whole history of parliamentary legislation for a number of years past has been nothing but the destruction of monopolies. The Test and Corporation Acts, the Protestant monopoly in Parliament, the boroughmongers' monopoly, have successively fallen. The monopolies of corporators, and that

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1841.

of the East India Company, have also gone down. We are now pursuing monopoly into its last stronghold—we are assailing the monopoly of trade. Our opponents have not spoken out equally explicitly: they have not told us what they propose to do; but I will venture to say that before these discussions are brought to a close they will be obliged to speak out. It is due to themselves, to us, and to the country, that their opinions on these important matters should no longer be shrouded in mysterious silence, or concealed by evasive declarations. We have a right to call upon them, not to give us a new budget, for that we do not want, and would not accept if offered us; but to tell us, ay or no, whether they will adopt the principles on which we have founded our budget, and of which the country has unequivocally expressed its approbation. But I will venture to predict, that although they may resist those measures to-night for the sake of obtaining a majority in the division, yet if they should come into office, these are the measures which a just regard for the finances and commerce of the country *will compel them themselves to propose to carry.*" [1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lviii. 642, 663.

53. Reflections on this debate.

Memorable in many respects as the harbinger of the fall of the great party which for eleven years, with the intermission of a few months, had governed the country, this debate is still more remarkable as the first unqualified declaration of the principles of Free Trade; and never, certainly, were they more ably and manfully stated than by Lord Palmerston on this occasion. Equally remarkable was the prophecy, so soon destined to be fulfilled, that if Sir R. Peel and his party themselves came into power, they would be compelled themselves to embrace and adopt these principles. Nor is the debate less worthy of attention as exhibiting the rhetorical skill of these two great masters of the art of oratory. On the one hand, Sir R. Peel, carefully avoiding committing himself to any general principles, excepting the maintenance of the slid-

ing scale and the protective duties on sugar, was seeking to run the debate into a censure of the plans proposed by Ministers, and sarcastic remarks on the deficit in which they had landed the nation; on the other hand, Lord Palmerston carefully eschewed these unfavourable topics, and intrenched himself in the principles of Free Trade, which his practised eye already told him would ere long obtain the ascendancy in the country.

54. Subsequent measures. Vote of want of confidence. June 4.

Every one saw that the decisive majority of 36 against Ministers on this vital question had numbered the days of the Government, and it was generally expected that they would announce their resignations next evening in Parliament. Contrary to expectation, however, this was not done; on the contrary, Lord John Russell contented himself with announcing that on the Monday following he should move the annual sugar duties, and on the 4th June bring forward the question of the Corn Laws. It was now evident that Government meant to evade the question of the budget, and, anticipating a deficit on the corn duties, would dissolve with a view to raising the cry of cheap bread. The skilful leader of the Opposition took his measures accordingly. When the question of the sugar-tax came on, he seconded the Chancellor of the Exchequer's motion that the existing duties should be continued for a year, and gave notice of a motion of want of confidence in Ministers, to come on on the 31st May.* It came on accordingly, and, after a debate of four nights, was carried against Ministers by a majority of ONE. It is remarkable how many decisive votes, both in France and England, have been carried by the same slender majority.[1] The vote which ushered in the French Revolution in 1789, that which introduced the Reform Bill in England in 1831, and that which finally dis-

[1] Parl. Deb. lviii. 676, 706, 1241.

* "That her Majesty's Ministers do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons to enable them to carry through the home measures which they deem of essential importance to the public welfare, and that their continuance in office under such circumstances is at variance with the spirit of the constitution."—*Parl. Deb.* lviii. 1241.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

1841.

placed the Whig Ministry, were all carried by a majority of one.

55. Dissolution of Parliament. June 29.

Upon this Ministers very properly agreed to evade all further discussion on the Corn Laws, to take a vote of supply for a few months, and then to appeal at once to the nation, which was finally to determine between them and their antagonists. This proposal was immediately agreed to by the Opposition. The remaining business of the session, which was chiefly of a formal nature, was rapidly hurried over, all measures of importance being dropped on both sides. The house quickly emptied, every one hurrying to the country to canvass his constituents; and on the 23d June, Parliament was prorogued by the Queen in person. On the 29th of the same month it was dissolved by royal proclamation, and writs for a new Parliament issued, returnable on the 19th August.[1]

June 23. June 29. [1] Parl. Deb. lviii. 1274, 1595.

56. Immense excitement in the country.

Immense was the excitement which followed in the country upon this appeal from the Sovereign to the people. Every one saw that the fate of the Ministry would depend upon the result of the contest, and this, more than the measures to be pursued by Government, or any abstract questions of commercial or social policy, was the issue upon which the rival parties went to the nation. It is true, the Conservatives, or "Protectionists," as they now began to be called, loudly declaimed, on the hustings and in the press, on the injury to native industry, both at home and in the colonies, which would ensue from the proposed reduction in the duties on foreign corn, sugar, and timber, and opposed to the cry of "cheap bread," which was loudly sounded on the other side, the cry of "low wages," held out as the inevitable consequence of any considerable reduction in the price of corn. Free Trade was the staple of the Whigs on this occasion; they stigmatised their opponents everywhere as monopolists; and whatever may be the real merits of that question, or its ultimate effects,

to them belongs the credit of having first and most manfully asserted it. But though they wisely, and with just foresight, endeavoured to run the contest into one of Free Trade or Protection, the people could not be brought to regard it generally in that light. They persisted in regarding it as a question of men, not measures; not whether the Liberal movement was or was not to be carried on, but whether Sir R. Peel or Lord Melbourne were to direct it. The majority of the nation were against them on that question. They were alarmed at the distress which had so long pervaded the country, and the serious deficit which had of late years appeared in the finances; they doubted the ability of the Whig Ministry to fill it up, from a conviction that they were not men of business habits or acquirements; and they distrusted the sincerity of the recent declarations of the Cabinet in favour of Free Trade, when the Premier had so lately pronounced the repeal of the Corn Laws the most insane project that ever entered the human head, and Lord John Russell had declared it to be absurd, mischievous, and impracticable. These were the views which divided and broke down the Liberal majority in the boroughs. In the counties the case was different. The contest was more taken up as one between low and high prices, paid and unpaid rents; and the agricultural interest stood shoulder to shoulder in a contest in which they considered their means of existence and that of their families was at stake.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1841, 143, 144; Mart. ii. 471, 472.

57. Result of the elections decidedly in favour of the Tories.

The elections began as soon as the writs reached the several returning-officers; and the result soon showed how great a change the four last disastrous years had wrought in the public mind, especially in the larger boroughs and manufacturing districts. London, as usual, was the first in which elections took place; and the issue of the contest was ominous of the general return, and of the fate of the Administration. Four Conservative candidates there

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1841.

appeared to contest the representation with the four Liberals, including Lord John Russell, who had held it ever since the Reform Bill passed; and the result was that two of them were returned, a Conservative (Mr Masterman) being at the head of the poll, and Lord John at its foot. In the counties, a large majority generally appeared for the Conservatives: in the English counties the majority was so great, that, excepting in a few places where the hereditary influence of a few old Whig families was not to be overcome, it may be said to have been overwhelming. Even Lord Morpeth was defeated in the West Riding of Yorkshire by a majority of 1100, by an opponent whom at the last election he had worsted by a similar majority, although he made a speech on his overthrow so eloquent and full of generous feeling, that every one who heard it declared he never would be in a minority again.* Lord Howick was worsted in Northumberland, Mr O'Connell in Dublin, for which city two Conservatives were returned. Even in Westminster, the stronghold of the Liberal party in the metropolis, Sir De Lacy Evans, a stanch Radical, was compelled to yield to Captain Rous, a decided Tory. The result of the contest was more favourable to the Conservatives than their most sanguine supporters had anticipated, for it showed a majority in the whole United Kingdom of 76 in favour of Sir R. Peel. In England the Conservative majority was 104; which was reduced to 76 by a Liberal majority of 9 in Scotland, and 19 in Ireland![1] A striking proof how much greater and more lasting had been the change

[1] Ann. Reg. 1841, 145, 147; Mart. ii. 471, 472.

* NUMBERS AT ELECTIONS OF 1837 AND 1841 FOR THE WEST RIDING.

Election 1837.		Election 1841.	
Lord Morpeth,	12,576	Hon. S. Wortley,	13,165
Sir G. Strickland,	11,892	Mr Dennison,	12,780
Hon. S. Wortley,	11,489	Lord Morpeth,	12,080
		Lord Milton,	12,031

This change was the more remarkable, that the West Riding was one of the greatest manufacturing districts in England.—*Ann. Reg.* 1841, p. 146.

1841.

worked in the two latter countries by the Reform Bill than the former.*

58. Defeat of Ministers in both Houses, and their resignation.

Parliament met on the 19th August, and Mr Shaw Lefevre was elected Speaker without a division. The trial of strength, to which the country looked with such anxiety, came on upon the amendment to the Address, which was moved by Mr Stuart Wortley, which was: "That the house most respectfully express their regret at the recent increase of expenditure, its determination to provide for that increase, and its earnest desire to promote

* The Returns were as follows:—

DIVIDED INTO COUNTRIES.

	Liberals.	Conservatives.	Liberal Majority.	Conservative Majority.
England and Wales,	199	305	...	104
Scotland, ...	31	22	9	...
Ireland, ...	62	43	19	...
	292	368	28	104

DIVIDED INTO CITIES AND COUNTIES.

	Liberals.	Conservatives.	Liberal Majority.	Conservative Majority.
English Counties, .	23	136	...	113
„ Universities,	...	4	...	4
„ Cities and Boroughs,	176	163	13	...
Scotch Counties, .	10	20	...	10
„ Burghs, . .	21	2	19	...
Irish Counties, . .	39	25	14	...
„ University, .	...	2	...	2
„ Boroughs, . .	23	16	7	...
	292	368	53	129

PROFIT AND LOSS FROM THE FORMER RETURN.

	Conservative Gain.	Liberal Gain.
English Cities and Boroughs,	38	31
„ Counties, . . .	23	1
Scotch Burghs, . . .	2	1
„ Counties, . . .	5	3
Irish Cities and Boroughs, .	6	1
„ Counties, . . .	4	1
	78	33

—*Ann. Reg.* 1841, p. 147.

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1841.

the welfare of her Majesty's subjects, and respectfully represent to her Majesty the necessity that her Ministers should enjoy the confidence of the country, which *the present Administration did not possess.*" The debate lasted four nights, and turned chiefly on the weakness of the Government, their manifold tergiversations, and the want of any settled principle in their administration, both foreign and domestic. Sir R. Peel, whose speech was loudly cheered, declared his determination to adopt a system entirely opposite. "If I exercise power," said he, "it shall be upon my conception, perhaps imperfect, perhaps mistaken, but my sincere conception, of public duty. That power I will not hold unless I can hold it conscientiously, in consistence with the maintenance of my opinions; and that power I will relinquish the moment I am satisfied that I am not supported in the maintenance of them by the confidence of this house and the people of this country." "I am convinced that if this country," said Lord John Russell in reply, "is governed by enlarged and liberal counsels, that its power and might will spread and increase, and its influence become greater and greater, and that Liberal principles will prevail, and civilisation will be spread to all parts of the globe, and you will bless millions by your acts and mankind by your union." Ministers were supported by O'Connell and the whole strength of the Irish Catholic members, as well as the Liberal majority in Scotland. But such was their unpopularity in England, that upon a division which took place on the fourth night of the debate, they were left in a minority of 91, the numbers being 360 to 269 in a house of 629, the largest upon record. The majority in the House of Lords was 72, the numbers being 168 to 96. After this decisive expression of the opinion of both houses, but one course remained to Ministers; and accordingly, in answer to the Address, the Queen said, "Ever anxious to listen to the advice of my Parliament, I will take immediate measures for the formation of a new Administration."[1] And on 30th August, Lord Melbourne announced in the

Aug. 30. [1] Parl. Deb. lix. 8, 16, 476, 483; Ann. Reg. 1841, 169, 196.

Lords, and Lord John Russell in the Commons, that Ministers only held office till their successors were appointed, and both houses immediately after adjourned. The resignation of Ministers was of course accepted, and the Queen sent for Sir R. Peel to form a new Administration.

59. Reflections on the fall of the Whigs.

Thus fell the Government of the Whigs, and fell never again to rise. The Liberal or movement party have been in power, indeed, for the greater part of the subsequent period, and to all appearance they are destined for a long period to hold the reins. But the Liberal is very different from the old Whig party—much more opposed to it than ever the Tory had been. These two rival parties, which so long divided the empire, were, after the termination of the contest with the Stuarts, and till the advent of the French Revolution, divided on no great questions of social or national policy; they were merely opposite competitors for power. But the case is very different with the Liberals, who, since the fall of the Whigs, have succeeded them in the administration of affairs. The proof of this is decisive; it is to be found in their legislative acts. They have been obliged to substitute favour to the Roman Catholics for the stern hostility of the Revolution; Free Trade for the protective system, which for a century and a half had regulated their policy; and unrestricted admission of foreign shipping for the Navigation Laws, the bequest of Cromwell, and which they had so long held forth as the palladium of the empire. They have been compelled to exchange concession to the great towns for the aristocratic rule of the great families. Nor have they, in doing so, yielded merely to that change of policy which every party, even the most consistent, must adopt from the changes of times and circumstances. The alteration has been so great, and has affected so deeply their private interests, that it has evidently been the result, not of change of views, but of necessity; for they have been compelled to abandon the Corn Laws, which in the long-run, when the effect of

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1841.

the gold discoveries has ceased, will halve their incomes, and accept, without any reduction, of the twelve millions of direct taxation exclusively affecting the land, the succession-tax, which in a few generations will double their debts.

60. The fall of the Whigs was owing to the Reform Bill.

It was commonly said at the time that this fall was entirely owing to the incapacity and vacillation of the Cabinet which then directed the affairs of the nation, and the want of business habits, which arose from their high birth and connections. But a very little consideration must be sufficient to convince every one that this was by no means the cause of the catastrophe. The Whig Cabinet, when it was overturned, contained many able and eloquent men, and they had sustained themselves with credit and talent against the most formidable Opposition, both in point of numbers and capacity, of which mention is made in parliamentary annals. True, their measures were vacillating, often contradictory, and sometimes little consistent with the dignity of a party really ruling the State; but the reason of that was that they did not really rule the State. After the election of 1835, their majority was so small, seldom exceeding, on a vital question, fifteen or twenty in the House of Commons, that they could never be sure of carrying anything; and like a ship contending at sea against an adverse wind, they were obliged to trim their sails, sometimes in one direction, sometimes in another, in order to secure any, even the smallest, progress in head-way. The deficit in the revenue which weighed so heavily upon them, and was the immediate cause of their fall, arose indeed from the monetary system, for which they had been the first to contend, but which had been latterly cordially accepted by their opponents, and sanctioned by an unanimous vote of the House of Commons. The real cause of their overthrow is to be found in the constitution of Parliament which they themselves had forced upon the Sovereign, and the fatal mistake committed by Earl Grey in supposing that the boroughs, returning three-fifths of the entire representation of the United Kingdom, would fall

under the dominion of the territorial magnates in their vicinity, because the nomination boroughs had hitherto done so. The result of the elections in 1841, when 220 borough members in the United Kingdom were on the Liberal side, and only 181 on the Conservative, while in the counties 181 were on the Conservative, and only 72 on the Liberal, proves how completely he was mistaken in his anticipations, and how utterly erroneous was his opinion that the change was aristocratic in its tendency. The result proves that the Whigs put themselves into schedule A as completely by the Reform Bill, as they fondly flattered themselves they had put their opponents.

61. The supremacy of England was destroyed by the Reform Bill.

But this is not all. Not only has the glory departed from the old Whig families from the effects of the change they introduced into the constitution, but, what is still more extraordinary, and certainly was not intended, *the ruling power has departed from the realm of England.* Strange as this result is, and little as it was anticipated from a change which the great majority of the English so vehemently supported, there is nothing more certain than that it has taken place. Ever since Sir R. Peel's dissolution in 1835, a decided majority in the House of Commons has been obtained from the Scotch and Irish members, *and them alone.* If the power had been vested in the English alone, a Conservative Ministry would have been in power, and a Conservative policy pursued by the Government, from that day to this. Even in the election of 1841, when the Conservatives for a period obtained the majority, it was by the aid of a majority of 53 in Ireland and Scotland that the Liberals were enabled to make head at all against the majority of 129 against them in England; and since that time the majority of the Liberals has been entirely composed of Irish and Scotch members; and that of the 21 which overthrew Lord Derby's Administration in 1852, was entirely drawn from the representatives of these two nations. Nothing but this extraneous power, joined to that of the

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1841.

English manufacturing towns, has forced upon the English aristocracy the income-tax, the repeal of the Corn Laws, and the succession-tax, now felt by them as so sore a burden. And thus, by the effect of its own act, has the mighty realm of England, which boasted of having conquered Ireland by the force of its arms, and won Scotland by the seductions of its power, fallen practically under the government of these two comparatively weak and powerless neighbours! Time will show whether their rule will be as steady, consistent, and glorious as that of the English aristocracy, which Earl Grey destroyed, had been.

62. Which is owing to Catholic ascendancy in Ireland, and passion for self-government in Scotland.

This extraordinary result of a movement which originated in, and was supported mainly by, the Liberals of England, is to be ascribed in Ireland without doubt to the ascendancy of the Catholic priesthood, which, exercising an absolute sway over their flocks and their representatives, has uniformly arrayed them in opposition to the English aristocracy, justly regarded as its most formidable enemy. In Scotland it has been owing to a different cause. It has arisen from the love of independence and aspiring tendency which are inherent features in the national character, which led to the long and obstinate wars that were waged with England, and which, since the auspicious union of the two kingdoms, has sent forth its sons in quest of fortune into every quarter of the globe, and has so often raised them to power and affluence in distant realms. This aspiring and persevering disposition is closely connected with, and is in fact the main element in, the desire for self-government; and hence the Scotch burghs, twenty-three in number, have, since the passing of the Reform Bill, with one or two exceptions, produced by powerful local influence, returned the Liberal members who have, with the Irish Catholics, kept the Liberal ministers in power. Whether this aspiring and democratic tendency will in Scotland, as it has done in so many other countries, give way to the

return to Conservatism, which is the result of extended information, or the weariness and distrust which are too often the bitter lessons of experience, or the love of gain, which is not less inherent in the Scottish character, remains yet to be proved. But in the mean time it may with certainty be affirmed that these peculiarities in the Scottish character have produced important effects upon the fortunes of the empire in recent times, and given to its inhabitants an unobserved importance beyond what could have been anticipated from their numbers, wealth, or apparent influence in the realm.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

INDIA FROM THE TERMINATION OF THE MAHRATTA WAR IN 1806, TO THE FALL OF BHURTPORE IN 1826.

CHAP. XXXIX.

1806.

1. Universal feeling of mankind to resist foreign aggression.

If there is any instinct more strongly than another implanted in the universal heart of man, it is that which leads him to repel foreign aggression and dread external subjugation. Other national feelings are partial in their operation or temporary in their effects: the lust of conquest or other violent passion is extinguished by success; the fervour of democracy wears itself out in a few years; the love of personal freedom is seen only among some particular races of men, and, even where it is most strong, cannot be relied on as likely to endure for any great length of time. But the love of country, the desire for its independence, are universal among men. These passions burn with even greater strength in the earlier than in the latest stages of society; they actuate alike the savage and the sage; they are coeval with the first dawn of civilisation; and when they become weakened, it may with certainty be concluded that the career of the country is drawing to a close. No memory is ever so fondly cherished among men as that of the patriot who has died in defence of his native land—none so execrated as he who has leagued with the stranger against it.

It is not without reason that nature has implanted this universal feeling among men, for the preservation of national independence is beyond all doubt the first of

Reasons of this universal feeling.

public blessings. So general is selfishness in mankind, that conquest is hardly ever undertaken but for the purposes of rapacity—power seldom acquired without being immediately turned to effect spoliation. In rude ages this is done by military power and the ruthless grasp of war; in later times, it is more commonly effected under the pacific guise of legislative change. But in either case the result is the same; the property and industry of the conquered state are sacrificed to the selfish ambition of the conquering, and the interest of the subject territory is forgotten in the ceaseless aggrandisement of the ruling, So generally has experience proved this to be the case, that foreign subjugation and internal ruin are generally considered as synonymous; and the very word *conquest* indicates in its derivation the lamentation with which the transference of power to foreign hands has been attended. The only exceptions to this rule are in those cases comparatively rare—such as that of Rome in ancient, or Russia in modern times—when the advancing empire permanently incorporates the conquered territory with its original dominions, and the inhabitants of the latter are in some degree protected from the oppression of their conquerors by becoming part of their lasting possession. Yet even there the advantages consequent on conquest scarcely ever compensate its evils; the main-spring of general progress is weakened when the power of separate direction is taken away; the peace and order which the ægis of a powerful empire confers are found to be dearly purchased by its attendant burdens; and the nation which swells the train or supplies the army of a mighty conqueror often in secret mourns its chains, and prays for the defeat of the very standards to which its own fortunes seem to be indissolubly attached.

The British Empire in India appears at first sight to form an exception to this general rule. The plains of Hindostan have, from the very earliest times, been desolated by the arms, and held up as the reward of conquest;

CHAP. XXXIX.

1806.

more even than the Italian, their inhabitants have had to lament the fatal gift of beauty. The riches of the south have never ceased to attract the cupidity of the north to the regions of the sun. The Himalaya snows have been found a feeble barrier to its resistless fury. Devastated by successive irruptions of the Tartars and other invaders, the meek and pacific inhabitants of Hindostan have drained to the very dregs the cup of humiliation and misery from the conquerors of the north. So complete has been their prostration, so great the multitude of savage warriors who in successive irruptions have poured into their plains, that their descendants have become mixed in vast numbers with those of the vanquished people; and the present inability of India to make head against foreign invasion is mainly owing to the diversity of races, religions, and tongues with which it is crowded, and the impossibility of uniting such a heterogeneous mass in any durable league for the maintenance of their common independence. To a people so situated, the conquest of the English seemed, contrary to the usual case, an unmixed blessing, and the steady rule of a powerful Christian and civilised government a happy change after the savage inroads of Mogul conquerors, or the devastating strife of independent chiefs.

3. Apparent exception to this rule in British India.

4. Advantages of the English government.

In many respects the exchange of European for Asiatic government has undoubtedly been an advantage to the people of India. How great soever were the abilities, how splendid the achievements, how great even the passing benefits of their Asiatic conquerors, they never were able to establish a powerful government or found a lasting dynasty. With the death of the mighty conqueror who had founded the empire, the huge fabric soon became weakened and fell to pieces: the seductions of the seraglio, the corruptions of the throne, proved fatal to the rude energy of the north, and out of the ruins of the empire arose a multitude of independent rajahs, who contended for its spoils, and, leaving to the meek sultan the

phantom of royalty, secured to themselves its substantial advantages. To an empire so situated there can be no doubt that the conquest of the entire country by the English opened, in the first instance, immense advantages. It removed in a great degree, over the whole of its vast extent, the evils of internal war, stopped the devastation of one rajah's territories by another, closed the eternal pillage of the ryots by the intermediate officers of the government, and established the inappreciable advantages of internal peace and unrestricted interior communication. So great are these advantages, so real these blessings, that they have overcome, in a large part of the people, one of the strongest of human desires —that of national independence—and caused their incorporation with the British dominions to be hailed, in the first instance at least, with joy by the greater part of the sable inhabitants of Hindostan.

5. Evils of the English government which have subsequently appeared.

But all this notwithstanding, a considerable portion of the people would willingly exchange the deathlike stillness of British protection for the stormy animation of their native governments. The former is a peaceful arena, in which, *by them*, nothing but the humblest prizes are to be gained; the latter a warlike theatre, in which principalities and power are the rewards of the victorious soldier. It is not in human nature that the last should not be preferred by those by whom its prizes may be drawn, whatever it may be by those by whom its burdens are to be borne. Although, accordingly, the inhabitants of the British dominions are in general in a state of tranquillity, and bow the neck to a foreign yoke, which they deem the decree of fate, yet they are in reality very far indeed from being contented with their lot. They will doubtless endeavour to achieve their independence as soon as a favourable opportunity occurs for doing so; and the first great defeat on the plains of Hindostan will be the signal for a general insurrection of the native powers against the British rule.

CHAP. XXXIX.

1806.

6. Extent of the British empire in India.

The progress of the British in India has been nothing but one series of conquests, interrupted, but not stopped, by a terrible defeat beyond its mountain barrier, which seemed to forebode that the lords of Hindostan were not destined to extend their dominion into Central Asia. The Mahratta states—Gwalior, parts of Burmah and Nepaul, Pegu, Scinde, Lahore, Oude—have been successively acquired; neither the mountain fastnesses of the Ghoorkhas, nor the death-bestrodden jungles of Arracan, nor the far-famed bastions of Bhurtpore, nor the swift horsemen of the Pindarrees, nor the disciplined battalions of the Sikhs, have been able to withstand its irresistible progress. The show even of resistance is at an end; independence is unknown over the vast extent of the Indian peninsula. The empire thus formed constitutes, with the tributary states, which in fact form part of it, the greatest compact dominion on the face of the earth. From the Himalaya snows to Cape Comorin, from the mouths of the Indus to the Straits of Penang, it forms a vast peninsula, estimated as containing 1,385,000 square miles, or nearly ten times the area of France, of which more than one half is subject to the direct dominion of Great Britain. The total boundary by sea and land of this immense region is 11,200 miles, of which 4500 are formed by the ocean, and the remainder by the vast range of mountains which, with its extended branches, stretches all round it on the north and east, from the frontiers of Gedrosia to the extreme southern point of Cochin China. The inhabitants of this empire, subject to the direct government of England, are now, since the incorporation of Oude, about 120,000,000; the protected or tributary states are 41,000,000 more. Great as these numbers are, they are inconsiderable in proportion to the extent of the country they inhabit. In the British provinces the inhabitants are 157 to the square mile, in the native states 74—numbers respectively not one half of the densely or thinly peopled countries of Europe.[1] About

[1] Montgomery Martin's British India, 2, 3 (Introduction).

a third of the whole territories of the Company are still in a state of nature, and they might maintain in ease and affluence double their present inhabitants.

7. Great payments drawn from India and spent in England.

One material source of discontent and cause of impoverishment to India, so common with all conquered states, is, that a large proportion of its wealth is annually drawn away and spent in the ruling state. About £2,500,000 is every year paid away in England from Indian revenue to holders of East India stock, civil servants of the Company, or military charges paid at home. At least an equal sum is probably annually remitted to this country from the fortunes brought home by its civil and military officers, or the mercantile profits made by the numerous and enterprising traders who, since the throwing open of the trade, have succeeded to its lucrative traffic. Such a sum, annually drawn off and spent abroad, would be a severe drain upon the resources of any country, but it becomes doubly so when the value of the money thus abstracted is taken into consideration. The wages of labour are usually 2½d. or 3d. a-day in Hindostan, so that £5,000,000 a-year is fully equal to £35,000,000 in this country. We know what a serious burden the interest of the national debt is to this country, which is nearly of the same amount, though it is for the most part spent at home, and of course not lost to its industry; but what would it be if it were annually drawn away and expended in ministering to the luxury of the Hindoo rajahs, or swelling the gorgeous establishments of Calcutta?[1]

[1] Warren, l'Inde Anglaise, iii. 257.

8. Exclusion of the natives from situations of trust or emolument.

Unfelt by the ryots, whose wants seldom extend beyond the cultivation of their humble allotments, the monopoly of all situations of trust or importance by the British is a most galling and disheartening circumstance to the native higher classes in India. It is felt as peculiarly so by the Mahommedans, because their fathers were the last conquerors of the country, and but for the subsequent disasters they have experienced, they would have been

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

in the possession of all the situations of dignity and emolument. They form a numerous body, amounting to 15,000,000 souls, but still more important from the elevated class in society to which many of them formerly belonged. With the exception of that part of them which is enrolled in the army, the great majority of this class is in a state of sullen discontent, and ready to take advantage of the first opportunity which may occur to dispossess the English, and place themselves in all the situations which they at present hold. None but Europeans can hold a higher situation than that of lieutenant in the army, or a very subordinate collector or other functionary in the civil service.* We have only to ask ourselves what would be our feelings if the whole situations of dignity and importance in the British Islands were monopolised by thirty or forty thousand intruders from Hindostan, who carried back the wealth made on the banks of the Thames to be spent on those of the Ganges, to be able to appreciate the feeling of the people of India in the corresponding circumstances in which they are actually placed.

It is another circumstance of no small moment in considering the position of the British in India, and the

* "Quels sont les plus hauts rangs offerts à l'ambition des hautes classes? Dans l'armée un grade de Soabadar-Major, qui équivant à peu-près à celui d'adjudant sous-officier en France; dans l'administration, quelques places d'huissiers et de courriers.' Quand sous l'administration de Lord William Bentinck la Cour des Directeurs avait eu l'idée de donner un 'Writership,' c'est-à-dire, une place dans le service civil, au fils du célèbre Ram-Mohun-Roy, qui avait reçu une éducation Européenne, et était certainement supérieur en intelligence à un grand nombre de ces employés, cette proposition souleva une telle tempête parmi les bénéficiaires qu'il fallut y renoncer. Toutes les carrières, tous les emplois honorables, leur étant ainsi fermés, il s'ensuit que les fortunes aisées et les classes moyennes disparaissent successivement sans se remplacer, jusqu'à ce que dans un temps donné il n'existera plus qu'une *égalité de misère*, qui nivellera cinquante millions d'individus. J'inclus cette fois les Etats vassaux, qui viendront se dissoudre dans le même creuset. L'Angleterre, comme le vampire fabuleux, aura tout absorbé; il ne restera aucune sommité pour s'élever au-dessus des masses, parmi lesquelles on ne comptera plus que l'artisan, le cultivateur, le manœuvre, et le gendarme: rien qu'un peuple de serfs, jouissant d'une liberté nominale annulée par le besoin, et n'ayant d'autre alternative que de travailler pour le profit exclusif de ses maîtres."—WARREN, *L'Inde Anglaise*, iii. 252, 253.

chances they have of easily maintaining their ascendancy in it, that hitherto at least few of the commercial advantages which might reasonably have been expected from a union with Great Britain have been experienced by the inhabitants of Hindostan.* The export trade of Great Britain to India, indeed, has been very considerable of late years, and now amounts to above £9,000,000 a-year; but this has by no means been attended by a corresponding increase of Indian exports to Great Britain. On the contrary, the exports of India to England had been either stationary or declining for a number of years back prior to the great change in the Tariff by Sir R. Peel in 1842. The reason is, that in our intercourse with India we have thought only of the interests of our own merchants and manufacturers, not of those of our distant and *unrepresented* Eastern possessions. We boasted of the extraordinary fact that the manufacturers of Manchester and Glasgow can undersell those of Hindostan in the manufacture of cotton goods from the raw material grown on the banks of the Ganges; but we forgot at what price to the artisans of India this advantage has been gained to those of this country. Every bale of cotton goods sent out from Great Britain to India deprives several manufacturers in Hindostan of bread. British manufactures are admitted into India at a merely nominal duty; but Indian manufactures coming to this country were, till very recently, for the most part burdened with the

Injury to Indian industry from the connection with Great Britain.

* "For many years great commercial injustice was done by England to British India. High, indeed prohibitory duties, were laid on its sugar, rum, coffee, &c., to favour similar products grown in the West Indies. Still worse, we compelled the Hindoos to receive cotton and other manufactures from England at merely nominal duties (2½ per cent); while at the very same time 50 per cent was demanded here on any attempt to introduce the cotton goods of India."—*Commons' Paper*, No. 227, April 1846. The same principle was adopted with regard to silk and other articles. The result was the destruction of the finer class of cotton, silk, and other manufactures, without adopting the plea of Strafford in Ireland during the reign of Charles I.—namely, the founding of the linen trade as a substitute for that of woollen, which was to be extinguished in order to appease the English handloom weaver."—M. MARTIN'S *British India*, p. 543.

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

usual heavy import-duties, which even at present are 25 or 30 per cent, and before Sir R. Peel's reduction of tariffs, were in many cases 150, and even 200 per cent.* It is not surprising that in such circumstances, with *reciprocity all on one side*, the industry of India should not have reaped the advantages which might have been expected from its connection with Great Britain. If Calcutta had been the seat of government, and England the distant conquered possession, it is probable the relative scale of duties would have been reversed, and we should have had little cause to congratulate ourselves on our commercial intercourse with the East. The proportion which our export trade to India bears to the amount of its population is only £9,000,000 to 150,000,000 people—*little more than fifteenpence a-head;* while to Canada the proportion is £1, 15s. a-head; to the West Indies, £1, 18s. a-head; to America, 17s. a-head; and to Australia, on an average of years before the extraordinary start of the gold diggings, not less than £7 or £8.[1] †

[1] Martin's British India, 543.

The great cause of this extreme poverty of the inhabitants of India, is to be found in the heat of the climate,

* "Pour protéger le fermier qui émigre au Canada, le blé de l'Indo se voit frappé d'une droit de 30 pour 100. Pour satisfaire à l'avarice et gorger les colons Anglais des Antilles, le café, le coton, la laine, le teck, la graine de lin, la soie, la cochenille de Calcutta, de Madras, et de Bombay, doivent payer 100, 200, 300 pour 100. C'est-à-dire, pendant qu'on oblige l'Indien à nourrir l'industrie Anglaise, on refuse tout débouché à la sienne. C'est un habile ouvrier, un patient agriculteur, un tisserand consommé, auquel on interdit le travail, et qui n'ayant pas d'autres ressources, se voit condamné à mourir de faim."—WARREN, iii. 93, 94.

† The true principle on the subject was adopted by the East India Company on 11th May 1842, on the motion of Sir Charles Forbes, aided by the able and indefatigable friend of the colonies, Mr Montgomery Martin—viz., "That, in the opinion of this Court, the territories under the government of the East India Company ought to be treated as integral portions of the British empire; and that as a revision of the British tariff is taking place, this Court, in fulfilment of its duty to their fellow-subjects in India, do again petition both Houses of Parliament, praying for a *complete reciprocity of trade* between India and England, which, if fully and fairly established, will confer mutual and extensive benefits on both countries, and materially contribute to the security and permanence of the British power and influence in the Eastern hemisphere."—See *Asiatic Journal*, May 1842.

These principles were in great part carried into practice by Sir R. Peel in his tariff of 1842, by which the duties on Indian goods of all sorts were lowered

10. Causes of the extreme poverty of the inhabitants of India.

and the importance, in many places, of *works of irrigation* to keep in existence agricultural industry. Unlike the temperate regions of the globe, which are copiously watered by the perennial rains of heaven, the soil of India is for five months in the year deluged by frightful floods, and for the other seven parched up by excessive drought. In these circumstances irrigation, or the artificial supply of water by means of tanks during the dry season, is in most places an indispensable condition both of animal and vegetable life: it is to the territory of India what the floods of the Nile are to that of Egypt. But for it the whole soil turns in a single season into a wilderness. The immense floods which overspread the earth during the rainy season furnish water in abundance for the artificial supply of the land and the inhabitants during the dry period; but the tanks and canals, by which alone it can be preserved or distributed over the country, not only require a considerable expenditure of capital in the first instance, but a constant application of labour to keep them up. But for this they would turn into blowing sand during the dry season, or be washed away

most materially—with what effect on the industry of British India may be judged of by the following table:—

Years.	IMPORTS TO INDIA.		INDIAN EXPORTS.		INDIAN EXPORTS TO BRITAIN.
	Merchandise.	Treasure.	Merchandise.	Treasure.	
	Rupees.	Rupees.	Rupees.	Rupees.	Rupees.
1834-35	4.26.11.065	1.89.30.233	7.99.34.203	19.47.407	3.05.69.730
1835-36	4.78.18.475	2.14.69.651	11.10.64.955	10 81.093	3.97.53.038
1836-37	5.53.69.902	2.03.61.672	13.24.01.832	26.39.340	4.91.54.702
1837-38	5.03.24.711	2.64.01.013	11.24.27.801	34.06.563	4.35.28.221
1838-39	5.24.06.726	3 01.09.195	11.77.47.693	34.79.058	4.51.31.593
1839-40	5.83.12.368	1.94.52.642	10.86.27.456	47.05.231	5.96.99.519
1840-41	8.41.59.405	1.78.62.533	13.45.55.842	34.64.859	7.05.43.881
1841-42	7.75.85.563	1.84.13.353	13.18.52.176	51.50.757	7.12.07.484
1842-43	7.60.36.029	3.44.32.916	13.55.18.246	21.57.966	5.82.09.658
1843-44	8.81.79.974	4.79.46.781	17.25.34.772	74.60.763	7.76.01.283
1844-45	10.75.40.659	3.75.24.718	16.59.02.124	1.10.68.402	7.24.06.197
1845-46	9.08.74.794	2.49.59.536	17.02.86.734	81.60.284	6 68.89.433
1846-47	8.89.66.645	2.93.99.224	15.35 54.375	711.38.696	6.56.16.865
1847-48	8.59.76.150	1.97.33.914	13.31.23.970	1.42.60.380	5.68.38.267
1848-49	8.34.48.042	4.29.40.033	16.08.85.018	2 53.97.425	6.19.19.593
1849-50	10.29.98.886	3.39.68.074	17.31.22.993	97.12.441	7.02.64.706
1850-51	11.55.87.888	3.81.18.088	18.16.41.496	54.12.891	8.10.40.164
1851-52	12.24.54 902	5.05.20.590	19.87.92.537	91.90.889	7.13.88 884
1852-53	10.07.08.616	6.83.13.776	20.46.46.330	1.05.52.299	7.37.78.348

—M. MARTIN'S *British India*; Appendix, iii.

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

by the floods during the rainy. As an artificial supply of water, accordingly, is indispensable to cultivation in most parts of India, so the ceaseless efforts of industry are required to render perennial the prolific stream; and whenever, either from external violence or internal neglect, it has been suffered to fail, and the dykes and mounds essential to its continuance to fall into decay, population disappears, industry ceases, the jungle springs up, and the tiger or the rhinoceros become again the lords of creation.[1]

[1] Warren, iii. 246, 247.

II. Vast means of irrigation furnished by nature.

If nature has rendered India dependent on irrigation for the means of cultivation and the development of agricultural industry, she has been bountiful beyond example in furnishing the means of affording it to the inhabitants. Snowy mountains in every part of the torrid zone furnish the only reservoirs for perennial supplies of water; and it is for this purpose that the stony circle of the globe has been placed in these regions. But in addition to the vast snowy range of the Himalaya, which shuts in the Indian peninsula over its whole extent to the north, and by the innumerable streams which flow into the Indus, the Ganges, and the Barampooter, furnishes a perennial supply of water to the Punjaub and the whole valley of the Ganges in the north of the peninsula, another boon has been given by nature to southern India, which is peculiar to that portion of the globe. The monsoon, which blows for six months in the year over the Indian Ocean, strikes on the Ghauts, or range of precipitous mountains which, like the Andes in America, form its western boundary, and from whence many of the chief rivers of central and southern India flow in long and devious courses to the Eastern Ocean. The periods when the rivers, fed by the monsoon rains, are swollen, are those when the reservoirs of the Himalaya are not unlocked by the rays of a vertical sun; and when the streams flowing from the snowy mountains begin, like the waters of the Nile, to rise, the moisture of the monsoon ceases to swell those rivers which are

nourished by it. Thus northern and southern India is, each in its season, provided with the means of irrigation; and the skill and energy of man may, by means of tanks and canals, carry the fertilising stream into every field and garden of Hindostan.

12. Great extent of the sea-coast of India.

India, though a great continent, is essentially a *maritime* country; and the power which has the command of the ocean is sure, in the long-run, to have that of the land also. From the mouth of the Indus to the extreme point of the promontory of Arracan is a distance, in a direct line, of 4000 miles; and each coast of India stretches 2000 miles from Cape Comorin to the mouth of the Indus on one side, and to that of the Ganges on the other. So important is this great extent of sea-coast, and so vast the advantages which it offers to whichever power enjoys it, that it may be considered as decisive of any serious war in Hindostan. Alexander was foiled because he did not, England has succeeded because she did, enjoy it. The interior of the peninsula is intersected by numerous mountain-ranges, lofty plateaus, arid deserts, and deep rivers, which render internal communication always difficult, often impossible. Until a vast system of canals and railroads is established throughout every part of India, which would require a century and immense funds for its completion, nothing can compensate the want of a command of the sea-coast. If the Russians ever attempt the conquest of India, the greatest difficulty with which they will have to contend will be, neither the arid mountains of Affghanistan, nor the terrors of the Bamian and Khyber Pass, by which alone access can be obtained to Hindostan, nor the dense and disciplined battalions which will await them when they reach the passage of the Indus at Attock: it will be the fact that those battalions will be close to their own resources, drawn from the rich plains of India and the encircling ocean, the true basis of British military operations; while those of the invaders will have to be painfully brought

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

over mountain-paths a thousand miles in length. The siege of Sebastopol tells us what is the result of such a disparity in the means of obtaining the supplies of war.

13. Great public works which formerly existed in India.

It is only within these few years, however, that such beneficent public works, creative of wealth, essential to existence, have been constructed by the modern rulers of the country. Wherever you see vestiges of a magnificent canal, a splendid aqueduct, a life-teeming tank, you may be sure you are gazing on the work of some Hindoo or Mahommedan sovereign, or some of their successors. Almost all of these beneficent public works had fallen into decay before the career of British conquest, and with them disappeared nearly the whole population which had been nourished by their fertilising streams. They have not absolutely perished, but migrated in sorrow and poverty to some of the great towns or other districts where nature has been more bountiful. The Company, however, had, even before Lord Dalhousie's administration, which began a new era in these respects, done something for internal improvement. Between 1817 and 1843, they had expended £500,000 to the west of the Jumna, and £200,000 to the east of that river, in works of irrigation. But these works were trifling compared to the necessities of the country. The extent to which the evil has gone, from the long-continued neglect on the part of the British Government to carry into execution the great public works which are essential to industry and cultivation, would be deemed incredible, if not proved by incontestible evidence. Lord Ellenborough recently said in his place in Parliament, that in the course of one of his official journeys from Calcutta to Delhi, his progress was delayed by having to cross in ferry-boats *fifty-six rivers*, the bridges of which had been broken down, without any prospect of their being repaired. In the year 1827, no fewer than eleven hundred tanks burst in the district of North Arcot alone, and consequently the means of cultivating the country were wholly lost, although

it had been for a quarter of a century under British protection. The rich alluvial plains of the Doab, once fertilised by the canals of the Mogul emperors, have in great part become a wilderness. Clumps of mango-trees, planted around the former deserted abodes, alone indicate, at distant intervals, as the solitary ash-trees around what was once a garden in the Highland valley, where the abode of happy and industrious man had been. The magnificent fabric of irrigation formerly established, and which rendered the country a perfect garden, went to ruin in the days of the last Mogul princes, and has not as yet been restored by the Company: the banks are dried up, the mounds broken down or destroyed; and a few hollows filled with brushwood, and tenanted by wild beasts or serpents, alone indicate where the fertilising streams had formerly flowed. At the distance of a few miles from Delhi the country is entirely deserted; you meet only ruined temples, fallen pillars, and the mounds which tell where habitations had been; and if you ask the Mussulman whence this devastation has come, and whither the power of his fathers has fled, he replies with a sigh, that all efforts are vain against the decree of fate.[1]

[1] Warren, iii. 247; Parl. Deb. March 18, 1854.

14. Difficulties of the British Government as regards public works.

In justice to the British Government, it must be added that this neglect of the public works, upon which the prosperity of Asiatic communities is entirely dependent, has been owing to the most potent of all causes— namely, necessity. It is well known in the East that public assistance is indispensable to general prosperity, and that money expended on useful undertakings yields sixty, and even a hundred fold. A policy purely selfish would have made such outlay for its own sake. The real reason was, that, in consequence of the peculiar position of the British power in India, every farthing that could be spared or saved required to be reserved for warlike operations. Conquest to it was not the result of ambition, it is the price of existence. In a

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

country peopled by 150,000,000 souls, and which is to be really kept in subjection by less than 50,000 British soldiers, 8000 miles from their own country, it may readily be understood that the power of Government must rest upon opinion. It is by the prestige of irresistible force that not only is additional strength to be gained, but that already acquired is to be preserved. Towards the maintenance of this moral influence one thing is indispensably necessary, and that is *unbroken success*. Situated as the Company is, it can never be for its interest to engage in foreign wars, for that is to incur certain expense and probable risk for remote and contingent advantage. But from the obviously precarious nature of its position, and the great distance of the centre of its resources, it is constantly exposed to attack; and when assailed, it has no chance of salvation but in immediate and decisive victory. Protracted warfare is perilous, early defeat would be fatal to it. The misfortunes of Colonel Monson's division in 1804 exposed it to danger; the Affghanistan disaster in 1842 brought it to the verge of ruin. Thus it is indispensable that it should be at all times in a state of full military preparation, not only to repel aggression, but quickly to destroy the assailant; and intermission for a single year in this state of costly watchfulness might at any time expose it to destruction. It is a clear proof of what was the real cause of the long-continued indifference of the Company's government to public improvements, that from the time that the British power was thoroughly established in India, and its authority was paramount from the Himalaya to Cape Comorin, the former niggardly system in regard to public grants was abandoned, and in the latter years of Lord Dalhousie's administration, from £1,500,000 to £2,000,000 annually has been devoted to the construction of great public works, which will surpass, when completed, the fabled days of Mogul magnificence.

One serious and widespread cause of injury, in a

part of British India, has been the *Zemindar system;* and its partial failure affords a signal instance of the danger of attempting to extend the institutions which have proved most successful in one part of the world to another differently situated, and inhabited by a different race of men. When Lord Cornwallis first introduced this system into these conquered provinces, nothing, according to European ideas, could afford a fairer prospect of success, for it proposed to fix at a moderate rate the *perpetual* settlement of the ryots' quit-rent; and in the collectors of districts, styled the zemindars, it was hoped, would be laid the foundation of a feudal aristocracy which, without oppressing the people, the usual source of Asiatic grandeur, might be bound to the Government by the strong bond of mutual interest. But the result has in some measure disappointed these expectations; and the only effect of the system has been, in many cases, to ruin the zemindars, and impoverish the people. The reason is, that the quit-rent, though light in comparison of that which had been previously imposed and *nominally* required, was often much more than, under existing circumstances, could be *actually* and regularly paid. The Mogul princes required three-fifths of the produce, but the weakness of their government precluded them from levying it: the British required only two-fifths, but the collectors were compelled to pay it entire, and payment of all arrears was enforced with rigid exactitude. Many of these zemindars could not pay their rent to the treasury, or if they did so, it was only by extorting it with merciless rigour from the unhappy cultivators. Thus the result of this system, so well conceived in principle, so plausible in appearance, has often been, in practice, to ruin the permanent collectors, who, it was hoped, would form a middle class attached to the Government, and depress the cultivators, from whose labours not only the chief part of the national wealth, but two-thirds of the national revenue, was derived. Yet is there another side of the question;

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

and results on a great scale demonstrate that, in spite of the many evils to the zemindars which this system has introduced, it has, upon the whole, been beneficial to the ryots. Periodical famines, which, before the perpetual settlement, were the scourge of the province of Bengal, have been unknown since its introduction; and while the other provinces of India, in general, exhibit a deficit, that of Bengal, out of a land-rent of £14,000,000, exhibits a surplus of £2,800,000.* And sorely as the ill effects of the system have been experienced, it has never been deemed possible to alter it; for to do so would be to do away with what was justly held out as its chief recommendation—namely, its *permanent* character—and expose Government to endless applications for remission, both from the zemindars and their impoverished subjects.[1]

[1] Warren, iii. 62, 66; Montgomery Martin's India, 540.

16. The Village system.

The zemindar system is not universally established in India. In the northern provinces the old *Village system* is still preserved—a system so thoroughly adapted to the circumstances and wants of the country, and so associated with the habits of its inhabitants, that it has existed from the earliest times, survived all the changes of dynasty or conquest, and formed the nucleus round which society has perpetually been re-formed, when all but destroyed by the successive inroads of northern conquerors. According to it, each village forms a little community, governed

* Years.	BENGAL.			MADRAS.			BOMBAY.		
	Revenue.	Charges.	Surplus.	Revenue.	Charges.	Deficit.	Revenue.	Charges.	Deficit.
	L.	L.	L.	L.	L.	L.	L.	L.	L.
1839	9,561,444	8,437,736	1,123,708	3,535,875	3,581,405	...	1,445,296	2,083,222	637,926
1840	9,741,940	8,943,099	798,141	3,564,343	3,352,075	211,268	1,827,922	1,966,360	138,438
1841	10,437,861	9,367,408	1,070,453	3,593,010	3,356,993	236,017	1,750,884	1,995,073	244,189
1842	10,829,614	9,931,751	894,863	3,628,949	3,380,783	248,166	1,960,683	1,991,530	30,847
1843	11,523,933	10,122,149	1,401,784	3,601,997	3,342,573	259,164	2,046,725	2,204,121	157,393
1844	11,861,933	9,575,638	2,286,050	3,512,417	3,479,580	32,857	1,918,607	2,496,173	577,566
1845	12,174,338	10,170,220	2,004,118	3,589,213	3,523,598	65,615	2,047,380	2,569,910	522,530
1846	12,900,254	10,445,969	2,454,285	3,631,993	3,449,618	182,304	2,120,824	2,662,100	541,276
1847	11,947,924	10,546,089	1,401,835	3,638,589	3,373,445	265,144	1,900,396	2,553,286	652,891
1848	12,083,936	10,536,367	1,547,569	3,667,235	3,221,495	449,740	2,475,894	2,928,520	453,626
1849	14,243,511	11,033,855	3,209,676	3,543,074	3,138,378	404,696	2,489,246	2,999,119	509,873
1850	13,879,966	10,818,429	3,061,537	3,625,015	3,212,415	412,600	2,744,951	3,086,460	341,519
1851	13,487,081	10,970,180	2,516,901	3,744,372	3,244,598	499,774	3,172,777	3,151,870	20,907
1852	14,015,120	11,239,370	2,775,950	3,766,150	3,307,192	458,958	3,160,167	3,279,116	112,961

Independent of the home charges at each presidency.

—MONTGOMERY MARTIN'S *British India*, p. 540.

by elders chosen on the most democratic principles, and with its adjacent territory composes a little world within itself, independent, if left alone, of any external appliances. The land-tax which it pays to Government is received by its collectors from the elected rulers of the village, and they apportion out the burden with the most scrupulous care and perfect fairness among the different inhabitants. In this little community the professions are all hereditary. The tailors, the shoemakers, the bakers, the soldiers, succeed to their fathers' avocations: no one either thinks of leaving his, or can do so. So deeply rooted is this system over all India, as indeed generally in the East, that it survives all the convulsions of time. In vain does the storm of war roll over the little society; in vain does the torch of the Mogul or the Affghan consume their dwellings; in vain are they dispersed and driven into the abodes of the jackal or the tiger. When the tempest ceases, the little community again rises from its ashes, the scattered flock return to their former dwellings, "rebuild with haste their fallen walls, and exult to see the smoke ascend from their native village."

17. General increase produce over India.

It is not to be supposed, from this long catalogue of omissions, that the English government in India has been a source of unmixed evil to the inhabitants of the country. It has been in many respects a decided benefit, as is decisively proved by the fact, that the produce of the whole country is estimated by the most competent statisticians to be now 70 per cent more than it was a quarter of a century ago.[1] This proves that, although numerous and serious calamities have resulted from the country being subjected to the dominion of a power so far distant, and in many respects so different from that of India, yet, viewed in its entire effects, it has proved a benefit, and that the substitution of the steady administration of a Christian and civilised, instead of the fitful oppression of a Mogul or Mahommedan ruling power, has, upon the whole, been advantageous. And this

[1] Col. Sykes.

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

important fact encourages the hope that, if the British dominion in India endures long enough to permit the great improvements undertaken during Lord Dalhousie's administration, to produce their natural effects, the public revenue, as well as the industrial resources of the country, will be more than doubled. If the public works which are indispensable to the development of private industry, and which in the East must be undertaken by the Government, are once executed, no limit can be assigned to the impulse which, under an administration that forcibly retains the peninsula in peace, may be given to its population, riches, and revenue.

18. Effects of a real reciprocity, if established, with India.

Towards this object, however, there is one indispensable requisite, and that is, that the commercial policy of England towards India should be settled on a footing of REAL RECIPROCITY. The way to do this is obvious: admit Indian produce of every description into the British Islands on the same terms as British produce is admitted into Hindostan. Seek no advantage in commercial intercourse with our Indian empire that you are not willing to concede to it in return. Act as you would wish it to do if Calcutta was the seat of government, and Great Britain the subject and distant province. Different opinions may be entertained on the point, how far the natives of India can with safety be admitted to any considerable part of the offices of trust and emolument which are at present engrossed by the English: it may be unhappily true, that they are disqualified by nature and habit from exercising any of the rights of freemen; but that they are eminently laborious, and fitted to take advantage of every opening which can be afforded to their industry, is universally admitted. What a boundless field for Indian enterprise would be afforded by the immense wealth and vast manufacturing acquirements of Great Britain, if the produce of Hindostan was admitted on the just terms of entire reciprocity, and that vast region were really treated as a distant province of the empire! Under such a system,

coupled with a parental administration in regard to grants to public works, such as have honourably distinguished Lord Dalhousie's administration, it is not unreasonable to expect that in twenty years our exports to India may amount to £30,000,000 a-year; still, not more than 4s. a-head for the entire population. Nor would such just and generous conduct to an unrepresented, though vast empire, be less expedient and beneficial to the immediate commercial interests of the ruling State; for towards a great sale of our manufactures in India one thing is indispensable, and that is, the means of purchasing them to its inhabitants; and how is that to be conferred, unless an adequate market is afforded to their own industry?

19. Neglect of India as a cotton-producing country.

In one particular of vital importance to the manufacturing interests of Great Britain, its neglect of the agricultural interests of India has been unaccountable, and may in the end prove calamitous. India is a great cotton-growing country; England is a great cotton-consuming country, but from defect of climate cannot grow an ounce of it. Is it possible to conceive a combination of circumstances in which entire freedom of trade might be introduced with more effect, and produce more beneficial results to the British empire on both sides of the ocean? On the one side, a boundless market for an important article of agricultural produce; on the other, certainty of supply of the essential article of a great manufacture, from within the empire itself. Yet, strange to say, this obvious and reciprocal advantage has been entirely overlooked, and England has been content to be dependent on America, a jealous and sometimes hostile State, for the supply of this vital material for its manufacturing industry! The secret of this strange anomaly is to be found in the interested and selfish policy of the British Government, which, pressed by important manufacturing interests at home, has sacrificed the present welfare of its Indian possessions, and the future independence of the whole empire, to

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

the desire of getting the raw material of the cotton fabrics at the cheapest possible rates. Nature has not conferred upon the Indian peninsula the immense advantages of which she has been so prodigal to the basin of the Mississippi. No vast network of navigable streams, such as pour into the great artery of that noble river, brings the means of transporting cotton by water to every man's door. To supply this defect, and enable the cotton-growing districts of India to compete with those of America, it was indispensable, by means of railroads and canals, to confer those advantages upon them which nature had denied them, or by protecting duties to compensate for the want of the natural modes of transport enjoyed by America. The first cost money, and therefore was not to be thought of; the second was deemed objectionable by our manufacturers at home, who looked only to purchasing their raw material in the cheapest market, albeit that of an enemy. Hence the neglect of a branch of cultivation in India in which the English markets, had they been permitted to reap the benefit, would have doubled the agricultural riches of the country, and the continued dependence of the most important branch of our manufactures at home upon a jealous foreign State, by whom it may at any moment be cut, and ruin brought upon hundreds of thousands of our industrious workmen.

20. Impossibility of augmenting indirect taxes in India.

There is one peculiarity of Indian society which is very important, and singularly augments the difficulty of meeting by extraordinary taxation any serious extra expense in the public administration. This is the impossibility of making any material addition to the *indirect* taxes. Strange to say, the people who submit without a murmur to the payment of two, or even three-fifths of their rude produce to Government, could not by any effort be brought to acquiesce in any considerable addition to the tax on salt, opium, or any article of consumption. The reason is, that they are accustomed to the first, which from the

earliest ages has formed the main source of revenue in all the Oriental states; but they are not accustomed to the last, which has sprung up with the wide diffusion of comfort in the middle class, from the stability of government and comparative freedom of Europe. Indirect taxation is, comparatively speaking, unknown in the East, except in regard to salt and opium, the chief articles of consumption beyond the necessaries of life, not because the sultans lack inclination to exact it, but because their subjects have not the means of paying it. They regard indirect taxation as an unjustifiable and insupportable invasion upon their rights, and it is well understood that any considerable addition to the tax on salt or opium would produce a rebellion which might endanger the government. In fact, it would be not more impolitic to attempt, than impossible to carry into execution, any such innovation; for such is the poverty of the people, and the limited extent of their artificial wants, that they could not purchase articles, the price of which was enhanced in any sensible degree by taxation—so that the tax would defeat itself. But this circumstance constitutes a most serious difficulty in Indian government, which in European is comparatively unknown, and goes far to explain the stationary condition of the Indian revenue, notwithstanding the vast addition to the territories of the Company during the last forty years.

21. Revenues of the Company.

The revenue of India has increased with the vast increase of its territorial acquisitions of late years, but by no means in the proportion that might have been expected from their magnitude, and still less in proportion to the necessary expenses which have been attendant on their acquisition. The net revenue at present is about £26,000,000 a-year, but the expenditure is £28,000,000, leaving a deficit of £2,000,000. Twenty years ago, the income was only £20,800,000; but the expenditure was little more than £18,750,000, showing a surplus of above

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

£1,000,000.* This is a very remarkable circumstance, and but for the explanation of its causes, already given, would appear incredible.† There is every reason to hope that, if peace is preserved in India, and the great works set on foot by Lord Dalhousie are carried into complete execution, the surplus will again be restored, and the Government be enabled to undertake those still greater improvements which are alone required to develop fully the immense industrial and agricultural resources of the country.

It is not surprising that so much difficulty has been experienced in making the revenue of India keep pace

* Mean Revenue and Expenditure of India.

	Revenue.	Expenditure.
1832, 1833, 1834, . .	£20,837,000	£19,751,000
1840, 1841, 1842, . .	21,239,000	23,283,000
1853, 1854, 1855, . .	24,789,000	25,343,000

Public Debt of India, 1834 to 1853.

1834, . .	£35,463,483	1844, . .	£37,639,829
1835, . .	33,984,654	1845, . .	38,627,954
1836, . .	29,882,299	1846, . .	38,992,734
1837, . .	30,406,246	1847, . .	41,798,087
1838, . .	30,249,893	1848, . .	43,085,263
1839, . .	30,231,162	1849, . .	44,204,080
1840, . .	30,703,778	1850, . .	46,968,064
1841, . .	32,051,088	1851, . .	47,999,827
1842, . .	34,378,289	1852, . .	48,014,244
1843, . .	36,322,819	1853, . .	49,043,526

—Martin's *British India*, p. 341; and *Parl. Deb.*, May 1856.

† Receipts and Expenditure of India in the Year 1852.

Receipts.		*Expenditure.*	
Land-tax, . .	£15,365,000	Interest of debt, .	£2,503,00
Stamps on land and spirits, . .	1,185,000	Dividends, . .	650,000
Opium monopoly, .	5,088,000	Half-pay, &c. in England,	2,697,000
Customs, . . .	1,430,000	Army, ...	9,803,000
Stamps, . . .	491,000	Judicial establishments,	2,223,000
House-tax, . . .	118,000	Collection of taxes,	2,010,000
Post-office, . . .	200,000	Civil establishments,	1,928,000
Mint, ...	150,000	Costs of opium production, . .	1,370,000
Tobacco, . . .	63,000	Salt-tax, . .	350,000
Tribute, . . .	571,000	Marine taxes, . .	376,000
Miscellaneous, . .	1,522,000	Post-office, . .	213,000
		Custom-house costs,	189,000
		Mint do. do.,	60,000
		Stamps, . . .	82,000
		Public works, . .	4,223,000
Total gross, .	£28,610,000		£27,977,000

—Martin's *British India*, p. 541.

22. Decline of Indian industry under the former British administration.

with the extension of its territory, and the consequent increase of its necessary expenditure; for such have been the effects of the jealous commercial policy of the British Government, that so far from the manufacturing industry of the country having increased under its administration —at least as indicated by the returns of exports and imports—it has signally declined. In 1805, the Company possessed only 38,000,000 subjects in the territory directly subject to their government, and the exports of these were under 25,000,000 of rupees; in 1835 their subjects were above 100,000,000, but their entire exports were only 22,500,000 rupees.* The details of this extraordinary defalcation are still more instructive, for if the exports of cotton goods, shawls, and silk in 1825 are compared with those of 1835, there is a decline of 11,000,000 rupees (£1,400,000); and even taking into view the great increase of the export of opium to China, which was no less than 20,000,000 rupees (£2,500,000) in the period of comparison, there was a decline of the total exports of no less than 3,000,000 rupees, or £450,000.† In a word, the steam-engine of England has well-nigh destroyed the looms of India; and when we boast of the great growth of our export of manufactures to Hindostan, we forget the price at which that advantage has been

	1805. Rupees.	1835. Rupees.	Population.
* Native rude produce exported,	13,047,988	18,061,647	38,000,000
Manufactured do.,	11,849,670	4,502,362	100,000,000
	24,897,658	22,564,009	

The opium and indigo raised by English colonists, and with English capital, are in both cases excluded from the statement, which is meant to show the progress of native industry.—MONTGOMERY MARTIN'S *British India*, 541.

	1825-1826. Rupees.	1835-1836. Rupees.
† Cotton goods exported, . .	967,685	82,131
Shawls, do., . .	218,846	75,698
Indigo, do., . .	24,270,499	19,443,909
Silk, do., . .	15,670,509	11,034,047
	41,127,439 or £5,900,000	30,636,785 or £3,800,000

—MONTGOMERY MARTIN'S *British India*.

CHAP. XXXIX.

purchased in the ruin of our distant and unrepresented Asiatic subjects.

1806.

23. Items of the Indian revenue.

The greater part of the revenue of the British Government in India is derived from the land-tax, levied in the whole province of Bengal under the zemindar system; in the northern provinces, and all the recent acquisitions, according to the old village system. There is a third system, called the Ryotwar, established in a large part of the presidency of Madras, comprising nearly a third of the Indian dominions. Under this system, a maximum is fixed for the rent of land, which is paid directly by the ryot or cultivator to the Government, he retaining all the surplus for his own advantage. Of course, everything here depends on the moderation with which the rent is originally fixed; for, once imposed, it is in general rigorously exacted by the collectors, and often proves, in seasons of excessive drought, so oppressive as to land the cultivators in total ruin. The territorial revenues of the India Company have not increased so much as might have been expected, from the great additions which conquest and incorporation have made to their dominions; they have only risen from £13,431,000, on an average of three years ending in 1834, to £15,280,000 on a similar average ending in 1842, and to £21,347,000 in 1855. Considering that during this time the territorial surface of the British dominions has been augmented by 300,000 square miles, and its population by above 50,000,000 souls, this increase must be regarded as small, and indicating some essential defect still pervading our Indian administration.[1]

[1] Montgomery Martin's British India, 540, 541.

24. Monopolies of opium and salt, and lesser sources of revenue.

The next considerable source of revenue which the Company enjoys is derived from monopolies, especially of opium and salt; the latter an odious and unjust mode of levying an income, but alleged to be the only resource left, as the land-tax has been everywhere raised to the highest level which the people can bear, and their habits

render the imposition of indirect taxes impossible.* It is not of British introduction; the same necessity had led to its establishment under the native powers. It is a very productive impost: in 1840 it produced £1,450,000 in the province of Bengal alone; but this advantage is dearly purchased by the extreme privations to which the high price of this article, which is one of necessity, reduces the poorer class of cultivators. The profit derived from the monopoly of opium is still more considerable; it had become, before the Chinese war broke out, no less than £2,000,000 sterling, being 50 per cent on £4,000,000, the exported value of that precious drug sent to Canton alone.† These form the chief items of Indian revenue; for the custom-house duties are very inconsiderable, owing partly to the impossibility of rendering such taxes productive in India, partly to the interested legislation of Great Britain, which insisted on admitting British manufactures at a merely nominal duty of 2 or 3 per cent into all the British possessions in the East.

The British empire in India is essentially a military power: it was won by the sword, and must be kept by the sword. The military establishment, therefore, is a matter of vital importance to its existence; and the

* "On doit aux Anglais la conséquence forcée du malheureux arrangement par laquelle la majeure partie des terres a été affermée à perpétuité au-dessous de sa valeur, et par suite de laquelle l'Etat voit tarir la source la plus légitime des recettes nationales. Il est impossible, disent-ils, de suppléer à ce déficit par aucun impôt indirect; car, c'est un fait singulier, les fermiers se laisseront emprisonner, ruiner; les paysans se laisseront dépouiller de leur dernier sac de grain, réduire à la famine sans murmurer, tandis qu'on ne réclamera d'eux que la rente de la terre, parceque cette rente se trouve dans leurs idées recues de temps immémorial. Mais si le Gouvernement essayait d'établir un impôt indirect nouveau, il éprouverait immédiatement une résistance armée. Le premier pas dans cette voie conduirait à la destruction."—WABREN, iii. 84, 85.

† The progress of the opium trade to China has been very remarkable since its first introduction in 1817.

	Value of Opium exported.		Value of Opium exported.
1817,	£737,775	1826,	£2,445,629
1819,	1,098,250	1827,	2,810,870
1820,	1,116,000	1839,	4,000,000

CHAP. XXXIX.

1806.

25. Military establishment in British India.

greatest dangers it has ever encountered have arisen from the hasty and ill-considered adoption by its government of the economical maxims which, during the peace, were so much in vogue in Great Britain. It has undergone great changes at different times; and the fortune of war, as will immediately appear, underwent a similar mutation. In 1826, immediately after the termination of the first Burmese war, it was stated by Lord Hardinge in Parliament to amount to 302,700 men, of whom 45,000 were British, and 258,000 natives.* This immense force, however, underwent a great diminution, and in 1837 it consisted only of 186,000 men, of whom 30,000 were Europeans. This reduction, which continued for some years, occasioned a considerable diminution of expenditure, and enabled the Government, as already noticed, to accumulate a reserve treasure, before the commencement of the Affghanistan and Chinese wars,

* The exact numbers, without deducting the sick and non-effective, were :—

English (King's) troops,	21,934
English (Company's) troops,	3,600
English Artillery (Company's),	15,782
Engineers,	4,575
Total English,	45,891
Native irregular horse,	26,094
Infantry,	230,842
	302,827

—Sir H. Hardinge's *Statements*, Mar. 18, 1838; *Parl. Deb.*

In 1854 the Land Forces, Native and European, stood thus :—

	European Officers.	European Rank and File.	Native Officers and Rank and File.	Total.
Queen's,	896	25,930	...	26,826
Company, Eng.	588	14,061	...	14,649
Do. Natives,	3,644	3,122	233,699	240,465
	5,128	43,113	233,699	281,940
Subsidiary,	86	36	30,882	31,104
Police,	35	...	24,015	24,050
	5,249	43,149	288,596	336,994

—*Commons' Return*, 17th April 1855.

of £10,000,000; but it brought the empire to the very verge of destruction, both by the internal discontent which it occasioned and the external disasters which it induced. To carry on those gigantic conflicts, the army was again raised to 267,000 men, of whom no less than 47,000 were native British, either royal troops or in the service of the Company.* But though the English soldiers were admirable, the new battalions of sepoys were far from being equally efficient. Brought into action, and exposed to the most serious hardships and dangers, without having acquired the steadiness or confidence in their officers of old soldiers, they were far from sustaining their ancient reputation in the wars which ensued; and their frequent failures brought the empire into the most serious dangers, and added another to the innumerable proofs which history affords, that of all economy, in a military State, the most costly is that which diminishes the ranks of its old soldiers.† It has

* Military Force of India, Native and European, from 1817 to 1851.

Years.	Native.	Europ.	Total.	Years.	Native.	Europ.	Total.
1817	195,434	31,056	226,190	1835	152,938	30,822	183,760
1818	211,079	32,161	243,240	1836	153,306	32,783	186,039
1819	215,878	29,494	245,272	1837	154,029	32,502	186,531
1820	228,620	28,645	257,295	1838	153,780	31,526	185,306
1821	228,068	28,914	256,982	1839	176,008	31,132	207,140
1822	216,175	29,065	245,240	1840	199,839	35,604	235,403
1823	206,709	30,933	237,732	1841	212,616	33,406	251,022
1824	212,842	30,585	243,427	1842	212,624	42,113	254,737
1825	246,125	30,423	276,545	1843	220,967	46,726	267,673
1826	260,273	30,872	291,145	1844	216,580	46,240	262,820
1827	240,942	32,673	240,942	1845	240,310	46,111	286,411
1828	224,471	34,557	259,028	1846	240,733	44,014	284,747
1829	207,662	35,786	243,448	1847	247,743	44,323	291,796
1830	187,167	36,409	223,476	1848	220,891	44,270	265,161
1831	161,987	35,011	196,998	1849	229,130	47,893	277,023
1832	158,201	34,767	192,698	1850	228,448	49,280	277,728
1833	156,331	33,785	190,116	1851	240,121	49,408	289,529
1834	155,554	32,310	187,816				

—Montgomery Martin's *British India*, xii. App.

† The war expenses in India alone, independent of China, amounted in 1842 to £14,000,000 sterling.—Warren, iii. 195.

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

now come to be generally understood that the strength of our army in India mainly depends upon the proportion of Europeans who are employed in it; and between the Queen's troops and those in the service of the Company they now amount to nearly 50,000—about *a fifth* of the native troops.

26. Military establishment of India not excessive.

Great as the military establishment of India is, it is by no means disproportioned to its necessities or resources. A force of 280,000 men, of whom 49,000 are English soldiers, cannot be considered as excessive for a country of such vast extent, inhabited by 160,000,000 people, many of them of a warlike character, and all accustomed to internal feuds and warfare. In fact, it is nothing to the proportion of armed men to the whole population in the military monarchies of Europe; for it is only 1 soldier to every 500 inhabitants; whereas in France the proportion is 1 to 70, in Austria 1 to 72, in Russia 1 to 60, in Prussia 1 to 56. In most of the old civilised countries of Europe, the proportion of the soldiers to the inhabitants is nearly ten times that which obtains in India. The garrison in and around Paris, in a period of the most profound peace, exceeds the whole European troops in India. When it is recollected that India was won by the sword, and must be retained by it, its military establishment, so far from being regarded as excessive, must be considered as very moderate, or rather surprisingly small, and certainly not a third of what it was when the whole country was in the hands of jarring and independent native powers.[1]

[1] Martin, 538.

27. Sepoy troops.

It is recorded by Arrian, that, after his conquest of Persia, Alexander the Great formed corps of united Asiatic and European troops, which were invariably blended in the proportion of two of the former to one of the latter. After the battles of Delhi and Laswaree, Lord Lake wrote to the Directors of the East India Company that success could not be relied on in Indian warfare if the

proportion of British to native troops was less than 1 to 6.* Lord Clive said that "the empire of India would rest with the power which could bring into the field the greatest number of *European* troops." The opinions of these great Asiatic conquerors deserve all attention, and should never be absent from the thoughts of those to whom, directly or indirectly, the direction of our Indian empire is intrusted. Whether it is from difference of constitutional energy, or the debilitating effect of a warm climate, or the successive oppression of hordes of Tartar conquerors, from which, owing to their greater distance from Central Asia, the states of Europe have been exempt, it is now perfectly ascertained that the native soldiers of India, whether Hindoos or Mussulmans, are far from being equal to the Europeans, and that, unless supported by an adequate number of British troops, and led by British officers, no reliance can be placed on their steadiness in the day of battle. Occasionally they fight most gallantly, and instances have even occurred where they have confronted dangers from which British recoiled. But these are the exceptions, not the rule. Generally speaking, they will not bear a comparison with English soldiers, and, unless well supported, are almost sure to melt away under the first severe fire. This is a painful admission to make, for the native troops have many most valuable qualities, and without

* "I cannot avoid saying, in the most confidential manner, that in the event of a foreign foe coming into this country, without *a very great addition of men in Europeans*, the consequences will be fatal, as there ought always to be *at least one European battalion to four native ones*. This I think necessary. I have seen a great deal of these people lately, and am quite convinced that *without king's troops very little is to be expected*. In short, the infantry of this army, as well as the cavalry, should be remodelled."—*Secret Despatches*, LORD LAKE to LORD WELLESLEY, September 12, 1803 (the day after the victory of Delhi); WELLESLEY'S *Despatches*, iii. 312. "If they do not in England think it necessary to send British troops in the proportion of *one to three sepoy regiments*—which is, in fact, one to six in actual numbers, from the superior strength of the native battalions—they *will stand a good chance of losing India* if a French force once gets a footing there."—LORD LAKE to LORD WELLESLEY, October 10, 1803 (the day after the battle of Agra), *ibid.* iii. 396.

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

their aid our Indian empire could not be maintained for an hour. But it is better to be aware of the truth than to have it burst unawares; and by being sensible what they can do, and what not, disappointment is less likely to ensue, and the disaster consequent on misapprehension more likely to be avoided. The Indian army is very expensive, for the pay and allowances of the troops, both native and European, are on the most liberal scale; and the heat of the climate is such that much which in Europe would savour of luxury is there a matter of absolute necessity. It has been so, for the same reason, from the earliest ages, and will be so to the end of time. Punkahs to keep the air cool, regimental libraries to divert the soldiers, large barracks, comfortable bedding, and cold baths, are provided in most of the stations for the European soldiers. The enlistment of the sepoy is for fifteen years; no bounty is paid, and conscription is unknown, the service being so popular that there are commonly several candidates for each vacant situation. These accommodations, so different from the utter penury of their native dwellings, insure the popularity of the army as a profession, but they immensely increase the expense with which it is attended, and greatly encumber military operations; for the proportion of camp-followers to fighting men is seldom less than three to one—so that for an army of 30,000 soldiers provision must be made, for feeding or moving, for 120,000 mouths.[1]

[1] Thornton's British India, 279; Martin, 536, 537.

28. True policy to be pursued in regard to India by the British Government.

The system which should be pursued in a distant military empire such as that of India is abundantly plain. It is that which gave and so long retained in the hands of the Romans the empire of the world. It must be founded on military strength; the prestige of victory, the moral influence of irresistible strength, must play around its bayonets. The British Government there must always be considered as reposing in presence of a hostile population, which will take advantage of the first serious reverse to avenge upon it the loss of its independence. Any consider-

able reduction of military force, and, above all, *large disbanding of old soldiers*, must be considered as in the highest degree dangerous. But, on the other hand, the maintenance of such a large military establishment is very expensive; it will soon be felt as burdensome, and, if not compensated by other advantages, it may become impossible to keep it up. The only way in which it is possible to combine these different objects is to maintain a powerful standing army, such as may at any moment be adequate to any emergency, but to accompany this with liberal grants for the encouragement of industry and the improvement of the country, and the most entirely just and even indulgent system of commercial intercourse. It is at all times an easy matter in India to procure a supply of soldiers to any amount by voluntary enlistment, for the pay of a common soldier is more than double that of a common labourer; the real difficulty is to find funds to pay the large establishment which is requisite to preserve the command of the country. This is only to be done by liberal grants of public money to restore the aqueous communications of its fields, and the most enlarged and indulgent commercial policy, such as may give the inhabitants at once the means of paying the imposts, and secure their attachment to the Government which imposes them. Lord Dalhousie's administration afforded a brilliant example of the first, Sir R. Peel's tariff of 1842 was the commencement of the second.

29. Judicial establishment of India.

The JUDICIAL ESTABLISHMENT of India is on a large scale, and undoubtedly is a very great improvement on the courts of the native princes. Justice is administered in cases of small value in the native courts, from the decisions of which there is an appeal to a higher court, either native or European, at the option of the appellant. The native and European are put on the same level in these courts; but there is an appeal from them both to superior courts, of which that of the Suddu-Adawlut at Calcutta is the highest, from which, in cases above £1000, there

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

is an appeal to the Queen in council. The proportion of reversals to adherences, though considerably greater than is usual in European courts,* is not more than might be expected, considering that the law to be applied is a strange medley of Hindoo, Mahommedan, and British institutions. It speaks volumes as to the integrity of British administration, and the confidence of the natives in it.[1]

1 Thornton's British India; Martin, 534.

30. The protected States, and their rapid decline.

One circumstance is very remarkable in India, and without a proper understanding of the causes to which it is owing, it would appear altogether inconceivable. This is the miserable condition and rapid decline of the *protected States*, which is invariable, and ere long becomes so excessive that they become incapable of supporting themselves, and, as a matter of necessity, are absorbed by the all-conquering power. The offer of the protection of the British Government presents almost irresistible temptations to an Indian potentate. The basis of it is the conclusion of an alliance offensive and defensive, which secures to the weaker State the guarantee of the stronger, and is accompanied only, in the first instance, by the requisition of supplies and pay for two or three battalions stationed as a subsidiary force in the capital of the protected State. So far nothing can appear more advantageous, and the smaller States are too happy in general to secure the ægis of a power capable alike of shielding them from

* SUITS DECIDED IN NATIVE COURTS, APPEALS, AND PROPORTION OF REVERSALS, FROM 1843 TO 1849.

* Years.	Average Suits decided by Native Judges.	Appeals— to European Judges.	Appeals— to Native Judges.	Reversals.	Proportion of Reversals to Suits.
					Per cent.
1843	39,181	4,505	3,083	2,301	5¾
1844	40,213	4,397	2,902	2,020	5
1845	40,579	3,980	2,809	1,895	4½
1846	41,775	3,901	2,392	1,676	4
1847	43,169	3,608	2,559	1,673	3¾
1848	41,340	3,977	2,916	1,736	4
1849	44,933	3,802	3,670	2,402	4½

—M. MARTIN, p. 534.

insult and protecting them from injury. But all this notwithstanding, independence is the first of national as of individual blessings; and so it is soon found, alike by nations and private persons who have lost it. Ere long the evils of dependence, the bitterness of protection, are experienced. All persons, whether in power or subject to authority, come to be convinced by a little experience that the state of weakness and thraldom in which the government is placed cannot long continue, and that things are only arranged for a time. A feeling of insecurity, a conviction of brevity of existence, comes to pervade all classes; and when once this idea has taken possession of a nation, unbounded calamities await them all. The tax-collectors exact the last farthing from the cultivators, from a conviction that every season may be their last; the Government are equally rigorous with the collectors, from the effects of the same belief. Expenditure on public works or private undertakings there is little or none—hoarding, on the contrary, generally prevails; for every one is looking for the advent of the period, too certainly approaching, when the protecting Government will at once take possession of the State, and an entire new set of functionaries will be established. Under the effects of this belief, cultivation and production rapidly decline; this only renders the condition of those who still carry it on more distressing, for they can look for no indulgence from the collectors. At length matters come to such a point that the revenue in great part fails; the troops, as the only means of keeping them quiet, are quartered upon the inhabitants; and in the end, with the cordial approbation of all classes, the protected State is incorporated with its protector, and under a reduced rent, and greater regularity of administration, the people hope at least that they have entered upon a better order of things.[1]

[1] Warren, i. 156, 172.

There is no country in which the want of an extensive paper circulation is more strongly felt than in India, for there is none in which the capacity of the people for

CHAP. XXXIX.

1806.

31. Great want of a paper circulation in India.

industry is more fettered by the want of adequate capital to carry it on. Previous to its conquest by the English, such was the distracted state of India that wealth was generally hoarded instead of being spent; and it was the propensity to do this which caused the drain of the precious metals to the East which has been observed from the earliest period of commercial history. Since it has fallen under British dominion, the annual abstraction of capital to this country has caused India to be constantly destitute of the wealth requisite to put in motion its industry, especially in a country where a great outlay for the purposes of internal communication or irrigation is essential to its first efforts. To a country so situated, an extensive paper circulation, founded on a secure basis, would be the first of blessings; what the want of it has proved, may be judged of by what in America its presence has occasioned. Yet, strange to say, there are very few banks in India, and such as exist have been established within a very recent period.* They are only twelve in number, and their notes in circulation amount only to the

* BANKS IN INDIA, WITH THE DATE OF THEIR ESTABLISHMENT, THEIR CAPITAL, AND NOTES IN CIRCULATION, AND BILLS UNDER DISCOUNT.

Banks.	Date of Establishment.	Capital paid up.	Notes in Circulation.	Bills under Discount.
1. Bank of Bengal,	1809	£1,070,000	£1,714,771	£125,251
2. Bank of Madras,	1843	300,000	123,719	59,871
3. Bank of Bombay,	1846	522,500	571,089	195,836
4. Oriental Bank,	1851	1,215,000	199,279	2,918,399
5. Agra do.,	1833	700,000	...	...
6. N. W. do.,	1844	220,000	...	...
7. London and Eastern do.,	1854	250,000	325,000	...
8. Commercial do.,	1845	456,000	...	...
9. Delhi do.,	1844	180,000	...	...
10. Simla do.,	1844	63,850	...	...
11. Dacca do.,	1846	...	...	...
12. Mercantile do.,	1846	328,826	777,156	109,547
		£5,306,176	£3,711,314	£3,408,904

—MONTGOMERY MARTIN; Appendix, xii.

trifling sum of £3,700,000, being not 3d. a-head to each inhabitant; whereas in Great Britain the proportion is £1, 8s., and in the United States of America £1, 18s. Nothing more is required to explain the stationary condition of industry in great part of India, or the extreme difficulty experienced of making the revenue keep pace with the necessities of the Government.

32. Great drain on the precious metals of England from India.

This consideration is of vital importance, not merely to the inhabitants of India, but to the monetary interests of the British empire. Since the heavy import-duties on Indian produce have been lowered by Sir R. Peel's tariff, Great Britain has experienced the usual fate of a rich and prosperous in connection with a comparatively poor and uncultivated country—that of being able to consume more than the State from which it imports the objects of consumption. The result of this is, that an extended commercial intercourse between the two soon *runs into a huge balance of imports over exports*, which requires to be adjusted by a great export of gold and silver to the poor agricultural State. *That* its inhabitants are always glad to take to any amount; but articles of manufacture are only taken off to a considerable extent when comfort has been long enjoyed, and artificial wants acquired among them. This effect has already taken place to such an extent, since the commercial intercourse with India has become so considerable, that the balance paid by Great Britain in specie has come (1835) to exceed £5,000,000 annually, and in 1836 amounted to £7,000,000; a severe drain upon her metallic resources at any time, but which, in the event of its coinciding with a foreign war, or bad harvest in Great Britain, may at once induce a monetary crisis of the severest kind. In point of fact, it largely contributed, with the necessities of the war in the Levant, to the severe drain upon the Bank in the end of 1855 and first four months of 1856, which reduced its stock of bullion to £9,875,000, and would have rendered a suspension of cash payments unavoidable, but

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

for the supplies from Australia and the termination of the war. A large extension of the paper circulation of India, therefore, is loudly required, not merely to carry through its great and growing public works, and sustain the industry of its inhabitants, but to lessen the perpetual danger, under our present commercial and monetary systems, of a serious crisis in the mother country.*

33. Splendour of the recent history of India.

To narrate the successive steps by which this great empire has been formed since the period when Lord Wellesley sheathed the sword of conquest and retired from India in 1806, after having added so much to the fame and the dominions of the English in it, would require a separate work not less voluminous and detailed than the present, and few historical compositions will be able to boast of a wider or a nobler field of narrative and description. A brief analysis of this splendid subject can alone be here attempted, which may perhaps, from the interest of the matter involved, tempt other readers to adventure upon it, and lead, in the hands of another, to a work second to none in modern Europe in interest and importance.

Lord Wellesley's administration was based on that clear perception of the perils which at that period envi-

* Colonel Sykes, whose intimate acquaintance with Indian affairs is well known, has unfolded the extent of this danger in a very interesting paper published in the *Statistical Journal*. The results of his researches, which were very numerous and elaborate, are thus given :—

Years ending 30th April.	Imports of India, including Bullion.	Exports.	Import of Bullion.	Excess of Exports, deducting Bullion.	Final Balances in favour of India.
1849-50	£10,300,000	£17,312,000	£2,425,000	£4,587,000	£1,651,000
1850-51	11,559,000	18,164,000	3,270,000	3,335,000	99,000
1851-52	12,240,000	19,879,000	4,133,000	3,506,000	729,000
1852-53	10,071,000	20,465,000	5,776,000	4,618,000	1,301,000
1853-54	11,122,000	19,295,000	3,389,000	4,784,000	934,000
	£55,292,000	£95,115,000	£18,993,000	£20,830,000	£4,713,000

—*Statistical Journal*, June 1856, p. 126.

roned our Indian empire, and that resolution in facing them, which form the characteristics of a great statesman. It was attended, accordingly, with the success which it deserved, but that very success proved fatal to its author. The East India Directors at home were far from being as thoroughly impressed as their able and intrepid viceroy with the necessity of "conquest to existence," as real to the British in India as it had been to Napoleon in Europe. They deemed, on the contrary, the career of conquest just concluded as not only extremely expensive in the outset, but eminently dangerous in the end, and therefore the instructions given to the new Governor-general were of the most positive kind to conciliate rather than overawe, and, above all things, reduce the public expenditure within the limits of the income. Lord Cornwallis, who was now advanced in years, was compelled to yield to these urgent representations, and set himself in good earnest to carry them into execution. In pursuance of this system, Scindia and Holkar were gratified, not merely by the surrender of part of dearly-purchased conquests, but by the renunciation of the alliance with the Rajpoot and other states which had taken part against the ambitious Mahrattas in the late crisis.[1]

34. Lord Cornwallis's second administration. July 1805.

[1] Martin, 405; Ann. Reg. 1805, 372-375.

This discreditable treaty proved to the last degree prejudicial to British interests in India. Scindia had permitted the English Residency to be attacked and plundered by a body of Pindarrees, and had himself detained the Resident, Mr Jenkins; but no reparation was demanded for this outrage. The territories of Holkar had been solemnly promised as the reward of conquest to the allied states, but they were all restored to the defeated chief. Not content with this, the English gave up the strong fortress of Gwalior and territory of Gohud, which they had promised to include in the protected states, to Scindia; "an act," as the Governor-general wrote to the Directors, "*entirely gratuitous* on our part." The rajahs and

35. Discreditable terms of the treaty to the English Government.

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

lesser powers on the other side of the Jumna, who had been in alliance with England during the war, were all abandoned, notwithstanding the strongest remonstrances on the part of Lord Lake, who contended that the bare "taking such a proposition into consideration would be considered as a prelude to their being sacrificed to obtaining a peace with the Mahrattas." In a word, the Mahrattas, at the conclusion of a war to them eminently disastrous, obtained all the advantages which could have been expected from a series of successful campaigns; and the English, as the result of their brilliant victories, were content to submit to a peace to them ignominious, and extremely prejudicial to their moral influence in the East. Such a result, by no means uncommon in British history, was not the result of incapacity in our diplomatists, as compared to our generals; it was owing to a much more general cause, and that is, the reluctance of a government essentially mercantile in its principles and structure to submit to the pecuniary sacrifices requisite to bring even a successful war to a lasting glorious termination.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1805, 374, 380; Martin, 405.

36. Death of Lord Cornwallis, and accession of Sir George Barlow, who concludes the Mahratta peace.

Although Lord Cornwallis had conducted the leading articles of this treaty, he did not live to complete it. He expired at Ghazipoor, near Benares, on 5th October 1805, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. Sir George Barlow, the senior member of Council, succeeded to the practical duties of government, and continued the system of concession so strongly impressed upon his predecessor by the Directors and Board of Control. Holkar and Scindia made no attempt to disguise their astonishment at the concessions thus voluntarily made to them by their victorious enemy; and Lord Lake, who was the diplomatic agent who conducted the negotiation, was so dissatisfied at the turn which it had taken, and the utter disregard shown to his remonstrances, that he resigned his diplomatic powers, and returned home, leaving a name which will ever stand forth with brilliancy in Indian annals. He did not long survive his restoration to his native country,

but died in England on 21st February 1808, at the age of sixty-four. The Mahratta peace was signed on July 6, 1806. During Lord Wellesley's administration, the revenues of the English Government were raised from £8,059,000 to £15,403,000, and although the expenditure, at the close of the war, exceeded the income by about £2,000,000, yet this was a temporary deficit, only occasioned by the magnitude of the war charges; and Sir George Barlow held out the prospect of a permanent surplus of £2,000,000 when the forces were reduced to their peace establishment.[1]

[1] Martin's British India, viii. *ad fin.*; Auber, ii. 432; Martin, 407; Prof. Wilson's Comments on Mill, 432.

37. Mutiny at Vellore. July 10, 1806.

Before peace had lasted any considerable time, events occurred which forcibly reminded the English Government of the precarious tenure by which their dominion in India was held. Sir George Barlow's provisional government terminated in July 1807, but before its expiry an outbreak of the most dangerous character had occurred at Vellore. The origin of this most dangerous mutiny was a most absurd and injudicious attempt made by Sir John Cradock and the military authorities at Madras, without the knowledge of Lord William Bentinck, the governor of that presidency, to force the sepoys to wear turbans in the form of a hat, and their chins shaved, without the distinguishing mark of caste, when on parade. With such rigour was this senseless regulation enforced, that nine hundred lashes were inflicted on two grenadiers who refused to obey it. The greatest discontent was excited by these proceedings; but so deeply was the conviction of the passive character of the Hindoos rooted, that it excited very little attention, until it led to a most formidable mutiny at Vellore on 10th July. The European part of the garrison, which was not a tenth part of the natives, was there attacked by the natives so suddenly, and with such fury, that Colonel Fancourt and one hundred and twelve Europeans perished in the first onset before any succour could be obtained. No sooner did the disastrous tidings reach Colonel Gillespie, who lay at Arcot, about

CHAP. XXXIX. 1806.

sixteen miles distant, than he instantly sounded to horse, and, proceeding at a rapid pace to the insurgent fortress, and having blown open the gate with his guns, forced his way in at the sword's point. Then was seen how vain are all attempts on the part of the Hindoos, when led by their native officers, to resist European energy and daring. After a short conflict the mutineers were routed: the bloody sabres of the English dragoons pursued them through all the streets; and three hundred and fifty were slain, and the rest made prisoners. Five hundred of these were sentenced to various periods of imprisonment and banishment, and the remainder pardoned. Thus was this most dangerous mutiny quelled in blood; the captive insurgents were gradually set at liberty; the cheerful obedience of the men, and their customary attachment to those whose salt they eat, returned, and the British officers "ceased to sleep with pistols under their pillows." Sir John Cradock and Lord William Bentinck were both recalled in consequence of this event. Sir George Barlow's provisional government came to an end, and Lord Minto was sent out as Governor-general, and arrived in India in 1807.[1]

[1] Martin, 407; Ann. Reg. 1807, 374-377; Auber, ii. 474; Bentinck's Memorial; Warren, ii. 157-159.

38. Lord Minto's Administration.

Lord Minto's administration, which lasted till 1813, was not distinguished by any serious wars; but he was far from pursuing the policy in neglecting native alliances which had distinguished Sir George Barlow's government. Some misunderstandings, which threatened serious ruptures, ensued with some of the native princes; but they were appeased by a mere demonstration of British force until, RUNJEET SINGH, the far-famed chief of Lahore, made an attack on some of the petty chiefs to the south of the Sutlej. To arrest this aggression, they were declared under British protection; and the ambitious rajah, unwilling to provoke a contest, concluded a treaty with the Company, by which he engaged only to maintain a limited force on the Sutlej; and GENERAL OCHTERLONY was stationed at Loodiana on the eastern side

of the river. The attention of the Indian government was mainly occupied, during Lord Minto's administration, by the war with France; the Mauritius, the Isle of Bourbon, and the Moluccas, were conquered by the force which he equipped in India in 1810; Java and its dependencies were wrested from the French and Dutch by the Governor-general in person in 1811. The latter of these valuable acquisitions was, with imprudent generosity, restored by the British to the Dutch government, on occasion of the general pacification in 1815. These important events, which properly belong to the great war between England and France at that period, are fully narrated in a former work by the Author.[1] Before Lord Minto's government, however, came to an end; it was found impossible to maintain any longer the non-intervention policy, and the seizure of Bhootwal, a border district, by the GHOORKAS, a hill tribe, who by fraud and violence had extended themselves over a frontier of seven hundred miles in the lower regions of the Himalaya, led to an angry negotiation with the government of that enterprising tribe, which was not terminated when Lord Minto's administration came to an end in October 1813.[2]

[1] Hist. of Europe, c. lxiv. § 131.

[2] Martin, 409, 410; Ann. Reg. 1813, 374; Auber, ii. 413.

39. Lord Moira's Administration. Ghoorka war.

The EARL OF MOIRA reached Calcutta in October 1813, and in the following month received the tardy reply of the Nepaulese government to the British proposals for a settlement, which, though conciliatory in appearance, was unsatisfactory in substance. This Lord Moira, a gallant soldier of chivalrous feelings and Plantagenet descent, whose ancient manor of Donnington had sheltered the Bourbons in their distress, was by no means inclined to submit to; and accordingly he demanded, in a peremptory manner, reparation for an outrage committed by these bold mountaineers on the British station at Bhootwal, in which an English officer had been barbarously murdered, and his detachment of twenty-four men slain. As the Ghoorka government refused to make either apology or compensation, Lord Moira declared war against them

CHAP. XXXIX. 1814.

in November 1814, and four armies were immediately formed for invasion of their territories. The first was commanded by General Marley, and consisted of 8000 men destined to act against Katmandoo; the three others of 4500, 3500; and 6000 men, respectively commanded by Generals Wood, Gillespie, and Ochterlony, were ordered to attack other portions of the long hostile frontier.[1]

[1] Prinsep's Trans. i. 170; Martin, 411, 412.

40. Ghoorka war.

The GHOORKAS, who were thus for the first time brought into collision with the British Government, and who bore a distinguished part in the war which followed, are a mountain tribe, of chivalrous manners and uncommon valour, who had by their superior courage and conduct obtained the dominion to a great extent over the valleys which border on the plains of Hindostan. The British here met "foemen worthy of their steel." In the mountains of Nepaul they encountered a body of warriors whose courage, vigour, and resolution caused them to experience the most stubborn resistance, and on many occasions made even British troops to recoil. Simple in their habits,—addicted, like most highland tribes, rather to plunder than industry, they are yet faithful to their word, hospitable to strangers, courteous to enemies. The venality and falsehood which prevail so extensively in the plains of Hindostan, they hold in utter abhorrence. If the English seldom encountered enemies of greater prowess, they never, when the contest was over, experienced such chivalrous courtesy from their opponents; and since these rude mountaineers have been taken into their own service, they have never been served by braver or more faithful soldiers.

41. Early disasters of the campaign.

For the first time in Indian history the British experienced in this war the sturdy resistance of the Asiatic mountaineers. The early operations of the war were unsuccessful, and betokened but too clearly the difficulties with which it was to be attended. The campaign opened with the siege of a hill-fort named Kalunga, in one of the first valleys of the mountains, which the English, according

to custom, expected to carry by a *coup-de-main*; but they were repulsed, and General Gillespie, who commanded the assault, while waving his hat to cheer on the troops, was shot through the heart. This check rendered it necessary to commence operations in form; and the siege was suspended till the arrival of the battering-train from Delhi; but even when a breach had been made, the troops, dispirited by their former repulse, could not be induced to storm it; and it was only by the tedious operation of shelling out the garrison that the fort was at length evacuated. In the interior of the fort was found a mingled mass of dead bodies and wounded men and women, mutilated and dying of thirst; a fearful proof of the determination with which the defence had been maintained. This unexpected and heroic resistance made a great impression on the British leaders, and, combined with the novel and difficult nature of the country in which the war required to be carried on, inspired a degree of vacillation in their councils singularly at variance with their wonted audacious bearing.[1]

Nov. 30.

[1] Martin, 411, 412; Ann. Reg. 1814, 371-374; Thornton.

42. General Ochterlony's successes.

In this emergency, victory was restored to the British arms by a chief who to the soul of a hero united the eye of a general. General Ochterlony had studied the Ghoorka mode of fighting, and scanned the causes to which the difficulties of the war had been owing. He met them with their own weapons, erecting stockaded forts, a species of warfare hitherto unknown in India, and taking the utmost precaution, by making roads through the jungles and mountains, and alliances with the native chiefs, to secure his rear and communications before he penetrated far into the country. Ere long the effects of this judicious conduct appeared; gradually the British general forced the Nepaulese to retreat; Ramgurh and other hill-forts were evacuated by them; and at length Umur Singh, their greatest chief, was obliged to take post with all his force in the strong position of Maloun. The stone fort thus named, with that of Sourajgurh, formed the two extremities, each

CHAP. XXXIX. 1815.

situated on a lofty peak, of a line of fortified posts, erected on a long and rocky ridge projecting from the hills into the country watered by the Sutlej. Of the intervening peaks, all were occupied and fortified by stockades except two, the Ryla and the Deothul. Perceiving the omission, Ochterlony rapidly advanced and seized these two important points in the very centre of the enemy's line, the first without resistance, the second after a sanguinary conflict, in which the native troops greatly distinguished themselves. Sensible of the necessity of dislodging the British from this position, the Ghoorka chiefs commenced a furious attack on it in the following morning with the flower of their force. Happily Ochterlony had spent the preceding night in strengthening the post with stockades, and planting some guns upon it. Notwithstanding this advantage, the enemy came on with such fury that they penetrated at several points into the intrenchments, and Bhurti Singh, a renowned leader, was bayoneted within the works. The contest was long and bloody; but at length the opportune arrival of a reinforcement with ammunition from the peak of Ryla, enabled the British to repulse the enemy, and in their turn to become assailants. The Ghoorkas were in the end defeated; and this was followed by the abandonment of the whole position, and concentration of their force in the fortress of Maloun, against which batteries were raised in the first week of May. After the battle, the Ghoorkas, who had shown the utmost courage in the strife, evinced a noble confidence in the courtesy of the British leaders, by sending to ask for the body of Bhurti Singh, who had been slain, and was in their hands. General Ochterlony immediately complied with the request, and sent the gory corpse wrapped in rich shawls, in token of his admiration for the valour of the fallen chief. His two widows burnt themselves next day on the funeral-pile, in compliance with his last injunctions.[1]

April 15.

[1] Prinsep's Trans. in India, i. 170; Martin, 412; Ann. Reg. 1815.

Meanwhile Lord Moira had been actively engaged in

organising forces, which commenced active operations on the side of Rohilcund, where the depredations of the Ghoorkas had excited the utmost animosity. The first of these auxiliary corps, under Major Hearsey, was attacked and dispersed by the enemy; but the second obtained brilliant success, and penetrated into the centre of the province of Kumaon, and so straitened the governor in Almora, its capital, that, after seeing the Setola heights, distant from it only seventy yards, stormed, he was obliged to enter into a capitulation, by which he agreed to evacuate the whole province. The intelligence of this success at Almora greatly facilitated the operations against Maloun. The old chief, Umur Singh, held out obstinately within its walls, in hopes that the rainy season, which was rapidly approaching, would compel the British to raise the siege. But in this he was disappointed; the trenches, though half filled with water, were still held by resolute defenders; the majority of the garrison came over to the British camp as prisoners of war; and at length Umur Singh, whose still remaining adherents were reduced to two hundred and fifty men, was compelled to sue for peace. This was granted, but on the most humiliating terms; Maloun was ceded, with the whole territory from Kumaon westward to the Sutlej, including Jythuk. Thus was a war which, in the beginning of the year, promised nothing but disaster, gloriously concluded before midsummer; and the whole hill-country from the Gogra to the Sutlej—a district hitherto deemed impenetrable to Europeans—was added to the British dominions. It added to the satisfaction produced by these triumphs, that they were mainly won by the native forces; for General Ochterlony's division, by whom they were chiefly achieved, was entirely composed of that force. He was ably seconded, however, by his European officers, especially Lieutenant Lawtie, field-engineer, who died, deeply regretted, of excessive fatigue before Maloun.[1] General Ochterlony was made

43. Further successes of the British, and conclusion of peace.

April 15.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1815, 374; Martin, 413.

CHAP. XXXIX.

1816.

a baronet, with a pension of a £1000 a-year, in acknowledgment of his services; and Earl Moira was advanced to the dignity of Marquess of Hastings.

44. Negotiations for a final treaty broken off by the Ghoorkas.

But the Ghoorkas, though defeated, were not subdued. Negotiations for a final treaty went on, which in some degree differed from those at first concluded with Umur Singh. The district called the Doon was retained, and incorporated with the British dominions; but the remaining territory, which had been conquered by Umur Singh, was proposed to be restored to the chiefs from whom it had been wrested, and taken under British protection. The Ghoorka chiefs, however, refused to accede to these terms, and in particular peremptorily rejected the proposed stationing of a British resident in their capital. The result was, that hostilities were renewed in January 1816, and Sir David Ochterlony advanced at the head of a powerful force of seventeen thousand men, including three European regiments, against the Nepaulese capital. All the usual passes leading from the first range of hills into the beautiful valley in which it is situated, had been carefully fortified by the enemy, and it was on the strength of these intrenchments that their whole reliance was placed. But Ochterlony received information of a deep and narrow ravine leading through the mountains, which had been neglected as being deemed impracticable, and by it he succeeded in penetrating into the country, and taking the whole Ghoorka intrenchments in rear. Advancing rapidly, the British general penetrated into the beautiful valley of the Raptee, and was moving on Mukwanpoor, when the enemy, seeing the necessity of fighting a general action if they would avert the capture of their capital, gave battle in the plain. The result was, that they were totally defeated, and submission was immediately made.[1] The rejected treaty was signed, and sealed with the royal red seal, and a duly qualified envoy presented it on his

[1] Ann. Reg. 1816; Martin, 413.

knees to Ochterlony in presence of all the chiefs of the camp.

1816.

45. Causes of the Pindarree war, and their outrages.

The inauspicious commencement of the Ghoorka war led, as similar disasters always have done in the modern history of India, to an incipient combination of the native chiefs against the British power. Scindia, who deemed himself strong enough now to measure swords with it alone, was the soul of the confederacy; but the chief reliance of the confederates was on the PINDARREES, a body of horsemen assembled from all parts of India, who had, during the concentration of the British forces to make head against the Ghoorkas, committed the most dreadful outrages in the British dominions. These formidable bands of robbers, who had arisen "like masses of corruption out of the putrefaction of weak and expiring states," had multiplied, as the terrible "English bands" did after the rout of Azincour, and from the same causes, in several of the richest and most fertile parts of India. During the year 1816, a band of these inhuman freebooters remained twelve days within the British frontier, during which they burnt or plundered 339 villages, put 182 persons to a cruel death, severely wounded 505, and subjected 3603 others to various kinds of torture. Twenty-five women, during these outrages, drowned themselves to avoid violation. The usual modes of torture adopted by these barbarians were putting heavy stones on the head or chest, placing red-hot irons on the soles of the feet, tying the head in a bag filled with hot ashes, throwing oil on the clothes and then setting fire to them, besides others still more horrible. These outrages being directed chiefly against the British subjects, the perpetrators of them were in secret favoured by Scindia and the other Mahratta chiefs, though they affected in public the greatest horror of them; and it was easy to foresee that any measures against them would bring the English Government into collision with the

CHAP. XXXIX. 1817.

whole Mahratta confederacy. But the outrages had become so formidable that the Marquess of Hastings felt the absolute necessity of repressing them; and he made such urgent representations on the subject to the Court of Directors that they authorised the commencement of hostilities, being convinced, in their own words, "of the irrepressible tendency of our Indian power to enlarge its bounds and augment its preponderance, in spite of the most peremptory injunctions to forbearance from home, and of the most scrupulous obedience to them in the government abroad."[1]

[1] Secret Letter of Directors, Jan. 1818; Auber, ii. 528; Malcolm's Central India, i. 431; Prinsep's Mil. Trans. ii. 21.

46. Lord Hastings' great preparations, and commencement of the war.

Fortified with this authority, Lord Hastings commenced operations on the greatest scale, convinced that he would have, sooner or later in the course of the contest, the whole powers of Central India on his hands, who could bring into the field 130,000 horse, 87,000 foot, and 600 guns.* An attack upon the powers of Central India from different quarters was resolved on, and the forces assembled for the purpose were on a scale worthy of the grandeur and power of England. They amounted to 91,000 regular troops, of whom 10,225 were cavalry, with 120 guns, besides 23,000 irregular horse. On the 20th October 1817, the Governor-general himself assumed the command of the grand army at Secundra, near Kalpee, and after crossing the Jumna on a bridge of boats, advanced to a position to the south of Gwalior, where Scindia had established himself in a permanent camp. The intercepted letters

* Viz.:—

	Horse.	Foot.	Guns.
Peishwa,	28,000	13,800	37
Scindia,	14,250	16,250	140
Holkar,	20,000	7,940	107
Bhounslay,	15,766	17,826	85
Nizam,	25,000	20,000	47
Patans,	12,000	20,000	200
Pindarrees,	15,000	1,500	20
	130,016	97,316	596

—M. MARTIN, p. 415.

which had been received left no doubt of the accession of the great Mahratta chief to the confederacy; he was only waiting for the junction of the Patans under Ameer Khan to commence hostilities. He had not anticipated, however, the vigour and decision of the English commander-in-chief, and found himself unable to withstand alone the formidable force arrayed against him. The consequence was he was obliged to yield. He agreed, as the price of peace, to unite his forces with those of the British against the Pindarrees, and as a pledge of his sincerity, to surrender in the mean time the forts of Hindia and Asurghur.[1]

[1] Malcolm, i. 436; Martin, 416; Ann. Reg. 1817, 467-469.

47. Farther successes of Lord Hastings. Battle of Kirkee. Nov. 5.

This blow, the deserved reward of foresight in preparation and promptitude in action, was decisive of the fate of the war. The treaty exacted from Scindia was speedily followed by the submission of the Patans and other lesser chiefs who lay next exposed to attack, and were equally incapable of resistance. The Pindarrees, finding themselves thus abandoned, retreated slowly before the advancing host, placing their last hopes on the secret assurance they had received of support from Poonah, the great centre of the Mahratta power. As usual with Asiatics in danger, they sought to gain time by elusory negotiations. But Lord Hastings was aware of their policy, and not to be deceived by their wiles. In the mean time, the Peishwa, the head of the Mahratta confederacy, after various proceedings indicative of the hostile spirit by which he was actuated, appeared with all his forces in the plain in front of the town of Poonah, and, desirous of averting hostilities, ordered his troops not to fire the first gun. Before the order was received, however, the action had already commenced by a battery of nine guns opening fire on the British on the right. This was immediately followed by a splendid charge of 6000 horse, bearing the swallow-tailed golden pennon of the empire. They were received by Colonel Burr, the intrepid commander of the 7th regiment, who took his post,

CHAP. XXXIX.

1817.

calm and collected, beside the colours, though one ball went through his hat, and another shot his horse dead. Fortunately, the Mahratta charge was broken by a ditch which ran in front of the British line, and as the horsemen were scrambling out of it they were exposed to so severe a fire from the 7th regiment that they fell back in disorder. The advance of the English, which immediately followed, proved the signal for a general retreat. This battle, which bears the name of KIRKEE, was one of the hardest fought and most glorious that ever occurred in India, for the disproportion of force was immense. The whole force engaged on the side of the British was 2800, of whom only 800 were Europeans. Their loss amounted to 186 killed and 57 wounded. The Mahratta force was 18,000 horse and 8000 foot, and they lost 500 men in the affair.[1]

[1] Prinsep, i. 107, 111; Ann. Reg. 1817, 384; Martin, 417; Duff's Mahrattas, iii. 429.

48. Second check of the Peishwa.

This glorious victory was soon followed by the surrender of Poonah, which capitulated on 17th November, the Peishwa, with all his forces, retreating up the Ghauts into the hill-country. Thither he was immediately followed by General Smith at the head of a considerable British force, who tried in vain to bring him to action. On the 1st of January 1818, a detachment under Captain Staunton, consisting of one battalion of sepoys, 400 irregular horse, and 2 guns, fell in accidentally with the whole force of the Peishwa, 25,900 strong. Though the disparity was so prodigious, the British commander was not discouraged, but, boldly pushing forward, took possession of a small edifice which had originally been a temple, where he prepared to maintain himself to the last extremity. The Peishwa immediately invested the little body of heroes with all his forces, and, deeming victory secure, ascended a neighbouring height with the Rajah of Sattara, in order to witness the surrender of the British. The contest seemed hopeless, but capitulation was never once thought of in that heroic band. "See," said Captain Staunton, pointing to the

Nov. 26.

Jan. 1, 1818.

headless trunk of Lieutenant Chisholm, which was lying beside a gun, "the mercy of the Mahrattas." The troops, though worn to death with fatigue, and fainting from thirst, declared to a man they would rather die than fall into the hands of such implacable foes. Happily, towards evening a supply of water was received, and the defence was kept up with such vigour that the post was maintained till dark. The firing gradually ceased; and in the morning, when the British were preparing to renew it, the enemy was descried moving off in the direction of Poonah, in consequence of the rumoured advance of General Smith. The battalion engaged lost 153 men, the cavalry 96, in this glorious combat.[1]

[1] Duff's Mahrattas, iii. 429-434; Martin, 417, 418.

49. Farther successes of the British.

Immediately after this success, Sattara was invested by General Smith, and it capitulated on the following day. From thence a proclamation was issued, taking formal possession of the Peishwa's territories in the name of the British Government, with the exception of a small portion which was to be restored to the Rajah of Sattara. After this advantage, General Smith again started in pursuit of the enemy; and he came up with a body of 9000 horse, with whom a fierce conflict immediately ensued. Such was the skill with which the Mahratta cavalry were handled, that the British were thrown into some confusion; and the consequences might have been very serious, had not, in the *mêlée*, Gokla, their renowned leader, been slain. The Mahrattas, when on the verge of victory, deprived of their leader, fell into confusion, and fled, leaving their baggage-camels and elephants to the unexpected victors. In this action the British loss was only 19, and 200 of the enemy were found dead upon the field. After this success the Rajah of Sattara, who had been in the Peishwa's camp, fell into the hands of the victors, and was taken under the protection of the Company, and General Smith resumed his pursuit of the Mahratta horse. It was attended, however, with great hardships; for the enemy retreated with extra-

CHAP. XXXIX.

1817.

ordinary rapidity, and many of the British, toiling after them over waterless plains under a burning sun, were struck dead by *coup-de-soleil*. The sufferings of the enemy, however, were not less severe, and at length the Peishwa, worn out with a desultory warfare, from which he had no prospect of retrieving his fortunes, surrendered, and became a pensioner of the British Government.[1]

1 Prinsep, i. 107-111; Wilson, ix. 245-250; Martin, 419.

50. Ravages of the cholera in Lord Hastings' army.

While these brilliant operations were breaking the strength of the Mahrattas, the troops engaged against the Pindarrees were afflicted with a visitation of Providence far more terrible than the sword of man. After the signature of the treaty of alliance with Scindia, on 5th November 1817, the CHOLERA, then for the first time known in British history, broke out with the utmost violence in Lord Hastings' army, and from the very outset committed the most dreadful ravages. The year had been one of scarcity, the grain was of inferior quality, and the situation of the British cantonment low and unhealthy. Everything was thus prepared for the ravages of the epidemic, which soon set in with terrible severity. For ten days the camp was nothing but an hospital; in one week 764 soldiers and 8000 camp-followers perished. At length the troops were removed to higher and more airy cantonments, and upon this the malady ceased—a memorable fact for the instruction of future times. As was afterwards often experienced, the ravages of the pestilence were greatest among the lowest portion of the people; only 148 Europeans perished in November, but above 10,000 natives fell victims to the malady. When it spread to Calcutta, it destroyed 200 a-day for a long time, chiefly among the worst fed and most destitute of the people.[2]

2 Wilson, ix. 253; Prinsep, i. 107-111; Martin, 419.

Notwithstanding this misfortune, which abated in three weeks, the advance of Lord Hastings upon Gwalior effectually prevented any co-operation between the Mahrattas and Pindarrees; and the latter, pursued by an over-

whelming force, and destitute of any strongholds or fortifications, were unable to make any effectual resistance. They were pursued in all directions, and all cut down or dispersed, with the exception of a small body, which took refuge in the camp of Holkar, near Mahidpoor. The government of the Holkar principality was at this time in the hands of Toolsa Bye, the favourite in the seraglio, and she had in her turn confided it to the Dewan, Gumput Rao. The troops, however, doubting their ability to withstand the forces of Sir Thomas Hislop, which were advancing against them, mutinied, threw Gumput Rao into prison, carried off Toolsa Bye to the banks of the Supon, where she was beheaded in the night while uttering piercing shrieks, and got possession of Mulhar Rao, now the acknowledged heir of the Holkar dominions. Next day a decisive battle was fought with such of Holkar's forces as still held out, and the remnant of the Pindarrees, which ended, after an arduous struggle in which the British lost 800 men, in the entire defeat of the enemy, who were weakened by the loss of 3000. The mother of Mulhar Rao, who was the regent, upon this immediately made submission to the British ; and, in return for the cession of a considerable tract of territory to the south of the Sautpoora range, was confirmed in the possession of her remaining territories. Some of the rajahs in her dominions repudiated this arrangement, and tried to renew the war, but they were pursued, and dispersed or taken. These successes were fatal to the Pindarrees, by depriving them of any support among the native powers. They retreated into the jungles and woody fastnesses, where they were actively pursued by the peasantry, who, in revenge for their former cruelties, massacred them without mercy. The last chief of these formidable bands was Chutoo, and at the head of 200 followers he long remained at large.[1] At length his horse was found grazing near the jungles of Asurghur, saddled and bridled, and at a little distance, a heap of torn and blood-stained garments, and

Victory of Lord Hastings, and termination of the war. Dec. 21, 1817.

Dec. 21, 1817.

[1] Malcolm, ii. 427; Martin, 420.

CHAP. XXXIX. 1817.

a half-eaten human head, the remains of a tiger's feast—"the fitting death," as M. Martin well observes, "of the last of the Pindarrees."

52. End of the war, and of Lord Hastings' administration.

The Pindarree war was now at an end, and nothing more was heard of these audacious marauders. Without a home, without leaders, without strongholds, they never again attempted to make head against the British power. They were gradually merged in the ordinary population, and resumed the habits of pacific life. Many of them settled in the Deccan and Malwa as cultivators, and, employing their energies in the right direction, became active and industrious farmers, as old soldiers often do. The Mahratta war was now practically ended; but the flight of Appa Sahib, one of their most active leaders, caused some anxiety, which was only terminated in April 1819 by the capture of the important fortress of Asurghur, from which he escaped in the disguise of a fakir, and sunk into insignificance, from which he never afterwards emerged. The war lingered still longer in the valley of Candeish, where there were various Arab garrisons, which were not finally expelled till June 1818, when Malligum, the strongest fort in the valley in their possession, was taken. The remaining years of Lord Hastings' administration were devoted to pacific duties, and the consolidation of the vast empire which he had brought under the British rule. Mr, afterwards SIR THOMAS MUNRO, here gave token of the great civil and military abilities he possessed, in taking possession of and regulating the country ceded by the treaty of Poonah; abilities so great as to justify the eulogium of Mr Canning, who said "that Europe could not boast a more distinguished statesman, or Asia a braver warrior." Lord Hastings resigned his office in January 1823, and returned to this country, where he was rewarded for his glorious and successful government of India by the gift of £60,000 to purchase an estate in the United Kingdom, in addition to those he had inherited from his Plantagenet ancestors.[1] After his return he was appointed

June 1818.

[1] Auber, ii. 540, 566; Martin, 420, 421; Kay's Life of Metcalfe, ii. 132.

1817.

Governor of Malta, where he died in 1826, in consequence of a fall from his horse.

53. Reflections on Lord Hastings' government of India.

His administration of India, during the nine years he held that arduous office, must be regarded as a model of vigour and ability. Clearly discerning the nature of the tenure by which, and which alone, our Indian empire was held, he as clearly perceived the only mode by which it could be preserved. Constantly threatened by a coalition of the native powers, whose united forces, if brought together, would much exceed what he could assemble at any one point, he saw that the only mode of combating it was by anticipating the attack, and opposing to the unwieldy strength of an alliance the vigour of single direction. His policy in attacking the coalition of the Pindarrees and Mahrattas in 1817, before they had time to unite their forces, was precisely that which Napoleon pursued against the coalition of the Continental powers in 1805, 1806, and 1809, and which was rewarded by the victories of Ulm, Jena, and Echmuhl. It met, accordingly, with similar and equally deserved success. He brought the Indian government, by his vigour and capacity, through one of the most dangerous crises of its modern history, augmented its territory, enhanced its renown, and finally broke the power of the Mahrattas, the most formidable and daring of its enemies. Under his administration the revenues of the State rose from £17,228,000 in 1813, to £23,120,000 in 1823. It is true, the military expenditure increased in a still greater proportion, being, on an average of five years from 1817 to 1822, £9,770,000; and the debt was enlarged by £2,800,000. But this arose entirely from the necessities of his situation, and the tolerance so long extended to the ferocious Pindarrees and the encroaching Mahrattas by the timorous and economising policy of the Court of Directors during the administration of his predecessors. If ever a Governor-general deserved a statue of gold, it was the Marquess of Hastings.[1]

[1] Martin, 421, 422; Conder's History of India, *ad fin.*

CHAP. XXXIX.

1823. 54. Amherst Administration, and war with Burmah. Sept. 1823.

Upon the retirement of Lord Hastings, the place he had so ably filled was at first destined for Mr Canning; but the changes in the Cabinet consequent on the death of the Marquess of Londonderry in 1822, led, as already mentioned, to his being placed at the head of the Foreign Office, and LORD AMHERST was selected for the direction of Indian affairs, and arrived at Calcutta in August 1823; the provisional government, since the departure of the Marquess of Hastings, having been in the hands of Mr John Adam, an able and honest man. The first subject which forced itself upon Lord Amherst's attention was the approaching war with the BURMESE on the eastern frontier of the empire, which it was evident could not be much longer averted, and which was the more formidable from the unknown nature of the country in which it was to be conducted, and the vague reports received of the boundless power of the potentate by whom it was to be maintained. The Burmese, originally subject to the neighbouring kingdom of Pegu, had revolted in 1753, and established a separate dominion, which progressively increased for seventy years, until it was brought into serious collision with the British power. The first cause of difference between them arose from the immigration into the British province of Arracan of some thousand peasants from the Burmese territory, who sought refuge in the Company's territories from the intolerable tyranny of their Burmese oppressors. In 1798, nearly ten thousand of these persecuted wretches rushed over the frontier in a state of frenzied desperation. They arrived in the English territories almost naked and starving—men, women, and children at the breast—but all declaring that they would prefer taking refuge in the jungles, and living, as they had done for months, on "reptiles and leaves," amidst tigers and lions, to placing themselves again under the odious tyranny of the Burmese.[1]

[1] Martin, 422, 423; Thornton, iv. 100, 112; Havelock, 154, 245.

The British Government, though alarmed at such a formidable irruption, even when only of starving suppli-

ants, taking compassion on their sufferings, assigned them some waste lands for their subsistence, and they were soon settled there to the number of forty thousand. The expulsion of these settlers from the British territories was repeatedly demanded by the Burmese authorities; but Lord Wellesley and Lord Hastings refused to do so, as contrary to the laws of hospitality, though they offered to surrender any malefactor who might have injured the Burmese, and even to permit the latter to seek for them in the British territories. This concession the government of Ava, which ruled the Burmese empire, ascribed, according to the usual custom of Asiatics, to weakness and fear on the part of the British Government; and an alliance was attempted to be formed between the King of Ava and Runjeet Singh, and other Indian potentates, for the expulsion of the English from India. Hostilities were thus evidently impending, but they were for some years averted by the conciliatory conduct of the British Government, which, engaged in the Ghoorka and Pindarree wars, had no wish to be involved in fresh hostilities. This conduct the Court of Ava deemed decisive proof of conscious weakness; and with a view to bring on hostilities, a descent of Burmese took place in September 1823, attended with the slaughter of the British guard on the island of Shahpoori, at the entrance of the arm of the sea dividing Chittagong from Arracan, and within the British territories. An explanation of this aggression was demanded, but the only answer returned was, that Shahpoori "rightfully belonged to the fortunate king of the white elephant, lord of the earth and seas; and that the non-admission of the claim of the 'golden foot' would be followed by the immediate invasion of the British territories." The Burmese government were as good as their word, for a force immediately advanced to within five miles of the town of Sylhet, which is only two hundred and twenty-six miles from Calcutta.[1] This brought matters to a crisis; and Lord Amherst, though with the utmost reluctance,

55. Irruption of the Mughs, and causes of discord with the Burmese.

[1] Martin, 422, 423; Thornton, iv. 119, 119.

CHAP. XXXIX.

1823.

took steps to punish the aggression, and assert the honour of the British arms.

56. Resources of the Burmese, and difficulties of the war.

The military strength of the Burmese was considerable, and both their government and troops were inspired with the most extravagant idea of their own prowess, and of the irresistible nature of the power which they wielded. Emboldened by a long train of victories over their unwarlike neighbours in the Cochin-China peninsula, they deemed themselves invincible, and, never having been brought in contact with them, were utterly ignorant both of the force of European arms and the strength of the British power. With a body of enemies at once so ignorant and so presumptuous, there would, in the ordinary case, have been no serious difficulty in contending. But the Burmese war was rendered a difficult, and, as it proved, a very murderous one, by the nature of the country in which it was to be carried on, and the peculiar species of defence which this had suggested to its inhabitants. The territories in which it was to be carried on, forming the alluvial plains of the Irrawaddy, could only be reached either by crossing a mountain-range 6000 feet high, and impassable for artillery, which separated it from the plain of Bengal, or by ascending the course of that great river after taking Rangoon, which lies at its mouth. The latter appeared the easier and more natural course; but steam-navigation was then in its infancy; no flotilla, impelled by that powerful agent, existed to breast the stream and surmount its descending waves; and the banks on either side, thick set with jungle, were in the months of summer and autumn extremely unhealthy. Add to this, experience had taught the Burmese the art of constructing wooden barricades or stockades in the vast forests with which their country abounded, which, concealed by a leafy screen till the assailants were almost at them, were nearly impervious to shot, and so firmly set as to be extremely difficult to force.[1] Behind these impenetrable barriers, the Burmese marksmen, themselves

[1] Thornton, iv. 127, 135; Martin, 423, 424; Auber, ii. 431-434; Snodgrass' War in Ava, 64.

secure, took aim with fatal effect at the assailants, and it required all the firmness of the bravest men to advance under the murderous fire.

57. First operations of the war. Taking of Rangoon.

The first operations of the war, as so often happens with English military operations, proved unfortunate. Nearly as ignorant of the strength and resources of the enemy as they were of ours, the force destined to act against the enemy by the British Government was not half of what was requisite for success. It was wisely, and in fact from necessity, determined to commence operations by a descent on Rangoon, and to march up the course of the Irrawaddy; but as this required the troops to embark from Madras and Calcutta, a very great difficulty was experienced with the native troops, part of whom positively refused to go on board. The consequence was, that the expedition consisted only of 11,000 men, of whom one half were Europeans; an unprecedented proportion in Oriental wars, and which would probably have insured early and decisive success, if it had been possible to bring them at once into action. Rangoon was abandoned without any serious resistance, and presented a valuable base of operations; and this was followed by the successful storming of the fortified post of Kemendine on the Irrawaddy, which was carried, after a gallant resistance, by the 41st and detachments of the 13th and 38th regiments and Madras European regiment, Major, afterwards SIR ROBERT SALE, being the first man who reached the summit of the work. But this success, though considerable, was the limit of our advantages, and ere long the invading army found itself involved in a mesh of difficulties, arising partly from the pestilential nature of the climate, and partly from the peculiar species of defence which their local advantages had suggested to the enemy.[1]

June 10.

[1] Martin, 423, 424; Thornton, v. 25, 26.

The progress of the army, even though successful in every encounter, was necessarily slow from the thick jungle with which the country was beset, and the pesti-

CHAP. XXXIX.

1824.

58. Slow progress of the war, and sickness of the British.

lential miasmata which a tropical sun drew up from the swamps with which it was everywhere intersected. To advance in these circumstances, and make the men sleep in the deadly thickets, seemed little short of madness, as it was to expose them to certain destruction; and yet to remain where they were seemed hardly less hazardous, for Rangoon in the autumnal months is so unhealthy that all the inhabitants who can get away leave it at that period. The British army was soon reduced by disease to less than half its former numerical amount; and the survivors were sadly depressed in spirit by seeing so many of their comrades stretched on the bed of sickness or buried around them. Encouraged by the slow progress which the invaders were making, the Burmese government made the most vigorous efforts to expel them altogether from their territory. Reinforcements and stores poured in on all sides, and the Burmese general received orders to assail the British and drive them out of the country. Notwithstanding his serious losses by sickness, Sir Archibald Campbell, the British

June 25. commander, resolved to anticipate the attack by offensive operations on his own side. An expedition was sent against the island of Cheduba, where 600 of the Burmese were intrenched, which was carried with the loss of half

July 1. their forces and the capture of the rajah. Soon after, the Burmese, in three columns, made a general attack on the English position, but they were repulsed at all points into the jungle without the loss of a single man to the victors. It was now evident that they were no match for the English in the field; but still behind their stockades, and aided by their forests and pestilential swamps, they were formidable antagonists. On the 8th July the British moved in two columns against the enemy, the one under General Macbean by land, the other, under Sir A. Campbell in person, proceeding by boats on the river to destroy some strong works which the enemy had erected to bar farther passage up the stream.[1]

[1] Thornton, v. 29, 30; Ann. Reg. 1824, 274.

1824.

Both attacks proved successful. After an hour's cannonade from the ships under Captain Marryat, a practicable breach was made in the stockade on the shore; the stormers were immediately landed, and carried three intrenchments, armed with fourteen guns, in the most gallant style. The operations of the land columns were equally successful. On arriving in the vicinity of the enemy, General Macbean found himself faced by a network of stockades, armed with heavy artillery, presenting, in the central redoubt, three lines of intrenchments, one within the other, and garrisoned by at least 10,000 men. Nothing daunted by these formidable means of resistance, Macbean ordered the scaling-ladders to the front, and the storming party, consisting of detachments of the 13th, 38th, and 89th regiments, advanced to the assault. In ten minutes the first line was carried; the second, after a violent struggle, was also stormed. Major Sale singled out a Burmese chief of high rank for combat, and slew him with his own hand. Soon after other stockades were carried, and the assailants penetrated into the inner work, after a desperate struggle, by mounting on each other's shoulders. The victory was now complete: ten stockades, armed with thirty pieces of cannon, were carried without a shot being fired, by escalade; and the enemy, four times the number of the assailants, were driven from their intrenchments with the loss of 800 men.[1]

59. Successes of the British. July 8.

[1] Thornton, v. 31, 32; Martin, 424; Ann. Reg. 1824, 271, 274.

Various attacks, some successful, and some unsuccessful, were made on stockades of the enemy near Rangoon, with a view to extending the quarters of the army and getting supplies during August and September; and at length an expedition, consisting of native infantry under Colonel Smith, was despatched to attack a fortified position of the enemy at Kykloo, fourteen miles from Rangoon. The work to be assailed consisted of a pagoda strongly garrisoned and barricaded, surrounded by several exterior lines of stockades. The latter were soon carried; but when the troops approached the

60. Reverses sustained by them. July 16. July 24. Oct. 10.

CHAP. XXXIX. 1824.

pagoda itself, they were assailed by so severe a fire from a covered and unseen enemy that most of the British officers who led the column were killed or wounded, and the few who survived were forced to take refuge from the deadly storm of bullets by flying to the nearest shelter. The result was that the sepoys dispersed, abandoned all the works they had carried, and sought safety in flight, which would have been most disastrous had not reinforcements despatched by Sir A. Campbell reached them ere long, and covered their retreat to Rangoon. The panic on this occasion, as is often the case in war, was not confined to the assailants; it extended also to the enemy; and when General Creagh advanced a few days after to renew the attack, he found the works entirely abandoned by them. The British were soon after consoled for this discomfiture by a successful expedition under Colonel Godwin against the town of Martaban, which was stormed by a detachment of the 41st and part of the 3d Madras native infantry. Immense military stores of all descriptions here rewarded the courage of the victors.[1]

Oct. 29.

[1] Thornton, v. 34, 36; Snodgrass' War in Burmah, 74-79; Martin, 424.

61. Sufferings of the British in Rangoon.

These alternate successes and defeats, however, determined nothing, and ere long the natural difficulties of the campaign appeared with fatal effect in the invading army. The country around Rangoon had been entirely devastated by orders of the Burmese government; and the thickness of the jungle and strength of their stockaded positions rendered it impossible for the British to extend their posts farther into the interior. The result was, that being cooped up in an unhealthy town in the autumnal months, without fresh meat or vegetables, the troops became fearfully sickly—fever and dysentery spread fatal ravages in the camp, and before the end of autumn there were not 3000 men left in it capable of bearing arms.[2] These calamities, to which the Burmese government were no strangers, encouraged them to persevere in their resistance, notwithstanding the repeated and unexpected reverses which they had experienced from their strange

[2] Auber, ii. 579; Two Years in Ava, 241; Martin, 424.

invaders. They were the more induced to continue the war from an old tradition that the capital would remain invincible till a "magical vessel should advance against it without oars or sails."

The determination of the government of Ava to persevere in the contest was much strengthened by reverses which at the same period befell the British arms on the land side towards Arracan. The operations there were conducted chiefly with a view to defence, as the principal attack was intended to be made up the Irrawaddy from Rangoon. Captain Noton was stationed at Ramoo, to cover the British frontier in that quarter, with 350 native infantry and 600 irregulars. The latter could not be relied on; and a movement of the whole in advance having been attended by many checks, Captain Noton fell back to Ramoo, where he was soon surrounded by a force, six times superior in number of the enemy. Notwithstanding this fearful disproportion, Noton gallantly maintained his position for several days, trusting to the arrival of reinforcements from Chittagong in the rear, which were reported to have left that place on the 13th, and were hourly expected. They did not arrive, however, and meanwhile the enemy pushed their approaches with such vigour that on the 17th they were within twelve paces of the British advanced works, and had got possession of a tank in rear, from which the troops had their sole supply of water. Retreat had now become unavoidable, and for some time it was conducted with tolerable order; but at length the irregulars fell into disorder; the confusion spread to the sepoys, who, instead of closing their ranks—the only chance of safety in such circumstances—disbanded and fled. Captain Noton and most of the officers were killed, nobly fighting to the last; three only, with a small portion of the troops, made their escape.[1] This disaster soon brought others in its train. The British force at Sylhet was withdrawn to Chittagong; the Burmese again entered Cachar; and such was the consternation which

62.

Reverses on the Arracan frontier. May 11.

May 17.

[1] Thornton, v. 39-41; Snodgrass, 79-84; Martin, 425.

CHAP. XXXIX. 1824.

prevailed, and the unprotected state of the frontier, that had the Burmese been in greater force they might have advanced to and possibly taken Calcutta.

63. Fresh efforts of the British, and their success.

Had the British Government been actuated by the instability of purpose by which the Oriental dynasties are in general characterised, they would in all probability, after these repeated disasters, have desisted from any further attempts against the kingdom of Ava. But this was not the national character, which is as much marked by vigour and energy, when roused and heated in a contest, as it is by supineness and want of preparation before it commences. The utmost efforts were made to reinforce the armies both at Rangoon and on the Arracan frontier, and the Diana war-steamer was added to the flotilla on the river. They had need of all their resources, for the preparations of the Burmese were very great. Mengee Bundoola, who had commanded the force which had gained such successes in Arracan, was withdrawn from the direction of that army, and placed at the head of a formidable army of twenty thousand men, which proceeded to invest the British troops in Rangoon, against which approaches were made with great skill, and in a style which very closely resembled that which afterwards became so famous when practised by the Russians

Dec. 1. in the defence of Sebastopol. The trenches consisted of a succession of holes, each capable of containing two men, excavated so as to afford complete shelter from any horizontal fire, and into which therefore the descent of a shell could only kill two men. Under the bank a hole was cut in each, entirely under cover, where a bed of straw and brushwood was prepared, where one reposed while the other watched. So rapidly were these subterraneous lodgings formed, that the whole army seemed to have been suddenly swallowed up by the earth. Various sorties were made by the British to impede the approaches, in

Dec. 5. one of which Major Sale and Major Walker, at the head of their respective columns, gained considerable

success, though the latter was unfortunately killed in the moment of victory. Soon after a vigorous attack was made on the whole of the enemy's lines, from which they were driven with great loss into the neighbouring jungle. But being strongly reinforced, they soon after returned to the attack, and contrived to introduce a number of spies and incendiaries into the town of Rangoon, who set it on fire in several places, and the conflagration was not got under till half the buildings had been consumed.[1]

Dec. 14.

[1] Thornton, v. 44-46; Snodgrass, 97-105.

64. Victories of the British before Rangoon.

The situation of the British army was now critical in the extreme, cooped up in a half-burnt and unhealthy city, surrounded by an army ten times as numerous as their own, whose approaches had been pushed to within a hundred yards of the place. From these straits they were happily extricated by the daring, and, in the circumstances, wise conduct of the commander-in-chief, seconded by the heroic valour of his troops. The whole force which could be spared for a sortie amounted only to fifteen hundred men, and they were led to the attack of twenty thousand brave and skilful troops intrenched to the teeth in stockades. The attempt seemed little short of madness, but nevertheless it entirely succeeded. Both attacks—the one headed by Sir Archibald Campbell in person, the other by General Cotton—proved victorious; and in fifteen minutes the most formidable works ever yet seen in the country were carried by storm, and the enemy driven into the surrounding jungles. On the same day an attack was made by the Diana and other war-vessels, under Lieutenant Kellett of the Arachne, upon the flotilla of the enemy, of which forty were taken. On this occasion the terrible efficacy of war-steamers was first signally evinced; the Diana ploughed through the flotilla of the enemy as if moved by magic, and with every broadside sent some of them to the bottom.[2]

Dec. 15.

[2] Snodgrass, 116, 130; Thornton, v. 49-51.

Taught by these disasters the quality of the enemy with whom they had to deal, the Burmese generals raised

CHAP. XXXIX.

1825. 65. Actions during the advance on Prome.

the siege, and retired towards Prome, the second city in the Burmese empire. Sir Archibald Campbell, having been reinforced by the 47th regiment and some cavalry and artillery, resolved to pursue them thither, and with this view advanced in two columns, the one commanded by himself in person, consisting of two thousand five hundred men, who went by land, of whom one half were European infantry; the other of one thousand five hun-

Feb. 13. dred, moving by water, under General Cotton. The latter column, in the course of its advance, encountered a large body of the enemy intrenched in a stockaded position at Donabru. An attack upon this work failed in consequence of its extreme strength, which proved impervious alike to the bayonets and the hatchets of the assailants. Upon learning this reverse, Sir Archibald

March 25. hastened with his own column to the spot, and soon saw that the work was much too strong to be carried by a *coup-de-main*. The stockade, which extended for nearly a mile along the bank of the Irrawaddy, was composed of solid teak beams, resting on strong stakes driven into the earth, and piled one above another to the height of seventeen feet. The interior of the work, which was armed with a hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, was protected against the explosion of shells by frequent traverses; and in front of all was an abattis composed of sharpened stakes, and a deep ditch rendered almost impassable by spikes, sword-blades, and other implements of destruction stuck in the earth. Wisely judging these works far too strong to be carried by escalade, Sir Archibald brought up his whole troops and flotilla to the attack, and commenced approaches against it in form. On the 27th the flotilla appeared in sight, and, headed by the Diana, found its way up, after sustaining a heavy cannonade, so as to effect a junction with the land forces, and their combined attack soon proved irresistible. A spirited sortie, headed by seventeen war-elephants, each bearing a tower filled with armed men,

was repulsed by the steadiness of the Governor-general's body-guard, under Captain Sneyd; two days after, the commander-in-chief of the Burmese, Bundoola, was killed by a rocket; and the breaching batteries having commenced a heavy fire, the garrison was seized with a sudden panic, and fled, leaving behind them stores of ammunition and provisions sufficient to serve the British army for months to come.[1]

[1] Snodgrass, 160, 172; Thornton, v. 52-55.

66. Capture of Prome. April 25.

After this brilliant achievement Sir Archibald returned to his line of march towards Prome, before which he arrived on the 24th April. He entered it without opposition next day, finding the town deserted, and partially on fire, but still armed by 100 pieces of cannon. Such was the strength of this position, that in Sir A. Campbell's opinion 10,000 steady soldiers might have defended it against 100,000 men. Active operations were then suspended for some months, in consequence of the setting in of the heavy rains, and excessive inundations on the banks of the Irrawaddy. Meanwhile, however, important movements went on, and great successes were gained on the land-frontier. Colonel Richards there recovered the province of Assam, which had been almost entirely lost after the disaster at Ramoo, and carried by storm a stockade near Rungpore, which had the effect of bringing the whole province into subjection. An attempt was afterwards made to penetrate from Sylhet into the Burmese territory through Cachar, with 7000 men under General Shuldham; but the expedition was abandoned in consequence of the inextricable difficulties of the miry soil, after an enormous loss in elephants, camels, and bullocks. But the grand effort was directed against the province of Arracan, to subdue which an army of 11,000 men was assembled at Chittagong under the orders of General Morrison, supported by a powerful flotilla under Commodore Hayes. These forces, having effected a junction, moved against Arracan, which they reached on the evening of the 28th March. They found the approach to the

Jan. 27.

CHAP. XXXIX.

1825.

capital barred by a Burmese force of 9000 men, which occupied a strong stockaded position on the summit of a range of hills, from three to four hundred feet in height, plentifully lined with artillery, and strengthened by escarpment, abattis, and masonry. The position was formidable in the extreme; but with the characteristic daring of British officers, it was resolved to make the attempt to carry it by storm.[1]

[1] Snodgrass, 194, 200; Thornton, v. 61, 62.

67. Storming of Arracan. March 29.

The attack was made at daybreak on the 29th, led by the light company of the 54th under Lieutenant Clark, supported by detachments of the 1st and 16th native Madras infantry. The ascent proved exceedingly steep, and as the troops toiled up, they were crushed by huge stones rolled down upon them, and a well-directed fire from above, which they had no means of answering. Notwithstanding these obstacles, the assailants persevered with the most devoted gallantry, and Lieutenant Clark, with several of the 54th, even got their hands on the trench; but all their efforts to penetrate in were unavailing, and the storming party was driven back after every European officer in it had been killed or wounded. The point of attack was now changed, and it was directed against the right of the enemy's position, where the ascent was so precipitous that less care had been taken to strengthen it. To divert the enemy's attention from it, a battery was constructed and a vigorous fire kept up on the pass where the main road traversed the hills, which continued the whole night, and meanwhile, in the dark, the assault on the right was made, and with entire success. The troops, after encountering unnumbered difficulties from the steepness of the ascent, which the enemy had deemed impracticable, reached the summit unperceived, and got in with very little difficulty, and without the loss of a man.[2] Upon seeing the British standard flying upon these important heights in the morning, and preparations made to attack the remaining portions of the line, the

[2] Thornton, v. 63-65; Snodgrass, 194-201.

enemy abandoned the whole position, and Arracan was occupied without further resistance.

So far the most brilliant success had attended this expedition, in which both officers and men of the native service, as well as the European, had displayed the most brilliant valour. But soon the wonted difficulties of the climate beset the victors; and the ulterior object of crossing the mountains and joining Sir Archibald Campbell at Prome was rendered impracticable. Soon after Arracan was taken the rainy season commenced, and brought with it the usual amount of fever and dysentery, which soon cut off vast numbers whom the sword had spared. So fearful did the ravages become that sickness in Arracan was soon all but universal; and although the enemy had abandoned the whole province, it was found necessary to withdraw the troops to more healthy stations, leaving detachments only on the islands of Cheduba and Rama. The troops under Sir Archibald Campbell at Prome were suffering hardly less from fever and dysentery, insomuch that active operations were during the rainy season entirely suspended. The Burmese government took advantage of this period of forced inactivity to open negotiations, after the usual Asiatic fashion, to gain time, and meanwhile extensive levies of troops were ordered in all parts of the Burmese dominions. The negotiations, as might have been expected, though protracted as long as possible by the Burmese plenipotentiaries, who were scrupulous in insisting upon every formality which could redound to the honour of the "King of the white elephant," came to nothing; and hostilities having been resumed, the Burmese army in great force advanced against the British. Two unsuccessful attacks on detached bodies of the enemy by native troops having been made, the Burmese general advanced close to the British lines, cautiously throwing up stockades and intrenchments as he advanced.[1]

Renewed difficulties of the British from sickness.

[1] Snodgrass, 220-228; Thornton, v. 65-70; Martin, 425.

Perceiving that the crisis was approaching, and being

CHAP. XXXIX.

1825.

69. Decisive victories of the British. Dec. 1.

desirous to bring it on before the enemy had materially strengthened their position, Sir Archibald wisely resolved to anticipate them, and attack them in their newly-formed intrenchments. The assault took place, accordingly, on the 1st of December, and was powerfully aided by the flotilla under the command of Sir James Brisbane. Two columns of attack were formed of the land forces,—one under General Cotton, the other under the commander-in-chief in person. The first was destined to attack in front the enemy's lines on the left, the second to turn their flank and assail them when endeavouring to retreat. Both attacks proved entirely successful. Cotton carried all the stockades opposed to him in ten minutes, and drove out the enemy's masses with great slaughter, and in the course of their flight they were opened upon, when endeavouring to cross a river, by Campbell's horse-artillery, which did dreadful execution. At this point fell Maha-Namion, a gallant old chief, seventy-five years of age, who had been brought out in a litter, at his own request, to take part in the action. By this success the Burmese position on the left was entirely carried, and the troops in it thrown back upon the centre; but there, and on the right, they stood firm. The attack on these points was accordingly renewed on the succeeding day, when, after a vigorous cannonade both from the land-batteries and the flotilla, an attack was made on the enemy's centre. It was led by the 13th and 38th regiments, under Major Howlett and Major Frith, supported by part of the 87th, who made a supporting attack in flank. The 38th headed the storm, which was executed in the most gallant style, and the whole intrenchments in the centre, above two miles in length, were carried, while at the same time the flotilla took or destroyed all the boats and stores which had been brought down for the use of the army. Nothing remained now to the enemy but their intrenchments on the right, which were attacked and carried, after a feeble resistance, by the British left.[1]

Dec. 2.

Dec. 5.

[1] Snodgrass, 238, 250; Thornton, v. 70-73; Martin, 425.

Upon this the whole Burmese army broke and dispersed in the woods, leaving their artillery, ammunition, and stores of every description, to the victors.

70. Advance of the British towards the capital, and submission of the Burmese. Jan. 2, 1826.

The military strength of the Burmese was now effectually broken, and the British army continued its march, unopposed by any considerable military force, towards the capital. But here again sickness appeared in the most appalling shape; cholera, in its worst form, broke out among the troops; and on more than one occasion their advance was stopped by the absolute impossibility of finding food in the dense jungles or inhospitable swamps through which their march lay. Aware, however, of the importance of striking before the enemy had recovered from their consternation, Sir Archibald pressed forward in spite of these obstacles, and the spectacles of horror which their retreat everywhere presented; and as the Burmese government had no longer the means of resistance, they were obliged now in good earnest to propose terms of submission and accommodation. The country through which the army advanced towards the capital, exhibited at every step melancholy proofs of the ravages of war, and the extent of the misery which it had brought upon the wretched inhabitants. For fifty miles up the river, and all along the road by which the enemy had retired, the ground was strewed with dead bodies; all the villages were burned or in ruins; room could scarcely be found for pitching the tents without removing the corpses with which the ground was encumbered, and in many places a dog, stretched on a newly-made grave, faithfully repelled the efforts of the voracious of his tribe to violate the sepulchre, and mangle the much-loved remains. These scenes of horror both depressed the spirits and augmented the sickness of the British army; and as the expected co-operation from the side of Arracan had not taken place, Sir Archibald's position was by no means free from anxiety.[1] It was with much satisfaction, therefore, that, on the 29th December, when

[1] Snodgrass, 250, 256; Thornton, v. 73-75; Martin, 425.

CHAP. XXXIX.

1826.

at Patanagoh, not far from the Burmese capital, the British general received proposals of peace from the Burmese government, and they were soon reduced to a formal treaty, which was signed by the British plenipotentiaries on the 2d January, and the Burmese on the 3d.

71. Renewal of hostilities, and final defeat of the Burmese. Jan. 19.

It was with reason supposed in both armies that the contest was now terminated; but the overweening self-confidence of the Burmese, and the intelligence they received of Campbell's not having been joined, as he expected, by the troops from Arracan, induced them once more to try the fate of arms. The pretext taken for breaking off the treaty before it had been ratified by the King, was a refusal on the part of the British to retreat to Prome unless the Burmese retired to Ava. Hostilities in consequence were resumed, and eighteen thousand Burmese, styled "Retrievers of the King's glory," were assembled in the intrenched camp of Milloon, covering the approach to the capital, under Nuring Thuring, or the Prince of Sunset. Eight-and-twenty guns were speedily placed in battery by the British on the morning of the 19th, and the troops advanced to the assault. Three brigades attacked by land, and one was landed from the boats. The troops in the boats, under Colonel Sale and Major Frith, landed before the others could get forward, and rushing up, carried the works alone, though defended by ten thousand men, with all their artillery and stores. Immediately after this success, the whole advanced, and were met by commissioners empowered to treat for peace. As the Burmese, however, were evidently adopting their old policy of negotiating to gain time, the British army continued to advance, the enemy retreating before them, and on the 9th February, the whole Burmese force, eighteen thousand strong, was attacked by eighteen hundred British under Sir Archibald Campbell. The enemy were drawn up in the form of a semicircle, with their guns all bearing on

Feb. 9.

the great road leading through their centre, by which it was thought the assailants would advance. But Campbell wisely declined that mode of combat, and made his attack instead by both flanks, which were comparatively undefended; he himself, at the head of the 13th and 89th, with a detachment of the Governor-general's body-guard, directing the right attack; while General Cotton commanded the left, composed of the 38th and 41st, with some Madras artillery. After a short conflict, the enemy, though immensely superior in numbers, gave way on both flanks, and rushed to a field-work in the centre, which was speedily stormed, with great slaughter, by the 38th. As a last effort, the Burmese general pushed forward a column on the great road in the centre, in hopes of piercing it, and separating the British wings; but it was met by the 89th, and forced to retreat. The enemy now fled on all sides, leaving their whole artillery, stores, and ammunition, which fell into the hands of the victors.[1]

[1] Thornton, v. 78-81; Martin, 425; Sir A. Campbell's Official Account, Feb. 9, 1826; Ann. Reg. 1826; Snodgrass, 239, 250.

72. Conclusion of peace.

After this decisive victory, nothing remained to the Burmese but submission to any terms which the victor chose to dictate. The British general, accordingly, was met when in full march for the capital, and only forty miles distant from it, by Mr Price and Mr Sandford, two Americans in the service of the Burmese government, and who were described "as the only persons they could trust," who announced the acceptance by the court of Ava of the terms insisted for by the British general. They agreed to cede the whole conquered provinces of Arracan, comprising Arracan Proper, Ramree, Cheduba, and Sandowy; and the Arracan Mountains were to form the boundary on that side between the two empires. They ceded besides the province of Ye, Tavoy, Morgui, and Tenasserim, with the islands and dependencies connected with them, rendering the Salouen river the frontier in that quarter. In addition to this, the Burmese agreed to pay a crore of rupees (£1,000,000) towards the expenses of the war; one quarter immediately,

CHAP. XXXIX.

1826.

upon receipt of which the British army was to retire to Rangoon, another quarter in an hundred days, on getting which the army was to quit the dominions of the King of Ava, with the exception of the ceded provinces; the third in a year, and the last in two years from the conclusion of the treaty. Thus, by the vigour and perseverance of the British generals, and the heroic valour of their troops, was this perilous war brought to a successful and glorious termination, the prestige of British invincibility, which had been violently shaken by the disasters at its commencement, completely re-established, and a well-defined and defensible frontier formed by a range of lofty mountains established on what had previously been the weakest frontier of our dominions. It was high time it should be so, for the crisis through which our empire passed during this war was of the most dangerous kind. Had the disasters which befell it at the commencement of hostilities continued much longer, and not been redeemed by heroic acts of valour in circumstances almost desperate on the part of the troops employed, all India would have been in a blaze, and insurrections would have broken out from one end of the peninsula to the other.[1]

[1] See the Treaty, Ann. Reg. 1826, App. No. 7; Thornton, v. 82-84; Martin, 425, 426.

73. Reflections on the Burmese and Pindarree wars.

In the whole annals of the British empire a more remarkable contrast is not to be found than is presented by the Pindarree and Mahratta wars undertaken by Marquess Hastings, and the Burmese by Lord Amherst. In the first, forces amounting to above 200,000 men were to be faced, and a confederacy embracing the whole of central India, the most warlike part of the peninsula, confronted. Yet such was the vigour of execution and sagacity of previous foresight and preparation, that this great alliance was broken in pieces before its forces could be assembled together, and success, as in a game of chess, was, from the very beginning, certain, from the first move having been so rapidly made that it proved successful. In the next war the inherent vice of the Anglo-Saxon character appeared in strange contrast: Athelstane "the Unready"

was well-nigh unhorsed by the first blows. The enemy to be encountered was not a tenth part as formidable; the Court of Ava could never bring above 20,000 men into the field; but, nevertheless, serious disasters were incurred. Inadequacy of the force at first employed, want of previous preparation and acquaintance with the country, an undue contempt for the enemy, and ignorance of his mode of fighting, were the causes of all these misfortunes. It was attempted to conquer the kingdom of Ava, one of the most warlike and determined in Asia, and possessing immense natural advantages from the thick woods with which the country is overspread, and the pestilential marshes with which it is beset, with 11,000 men landed at the mouth of the Irrawaddy, at the commencement of the most unhealthy period of the year! Disaster, rather from sickness than the sword, fearful and long-continued, necessarily followed such an attempt. But if the commencement of the war exhibited the weak, its prosecution and conclusion revealed the strong side of the Anglo-Saxon character. When the danger was revealed, and the serious nature of the contest stood apparent, neither vacillation nor timidity appeared in the British councils, any more than weakness or irresolution in the British arms. Reinforcements were poured in; adequate efforts were made; the exertions of Government were admirably seconded by the skill and valour of the officers, soldiers, and sailors employed; and the result was, that victory was again chained to the British standards, and a contest, which at first foreboded nothing but ruin to its arms, terminated by establishing the British empire on a more solid foundation than it had ever yet rested upon.[1]

[1] Thornton, v. 85, 101.

74. The Burmese war was necessary and unavoidable.

The Burmese war, as all contests are which prove at first unfortunate, and are attended with heavy expense, was, during its continuance, extremely unpopular in England; and even after its successful termination, the same apprehensions continued—dread of the effects of an undue extension of our empire coming in place of the dread of

CHAP. XXXIX. 1826.

the immediate defeat of our arms. But upon a calm retrospect of the circumstances under which the war arose, and the subsequent history of our Indian empire, it must be evident that the war was unavoidable, and that the only faults justly imputable to the Government were want of preparation on their own side, and ignorance of the enemy with whom they had to contend. It may be very true that the islands about which the war began were barren sandbanks, not worth a week's expenditure of the contest—that is wholly immaterial, in an empire resting on opinion, in considering whether the war could or could not have been avoided. A lash over the back will probably not seriously injure a gentleman, so far as his physical frame is concerned: but how will his character stand if he submits, without resenting it, to such an insult? The little island about which the dispute arose might be valueless; but character is inestimable; and in the affairs of nations, not less than of individuals, he who submits to aggression, or declines to vindicate honour in small matters, will soon find himself involved at a disadvantage in disputes vital to his existence.

75. Treaty with the King of Siam. July 26, 1826.

The good effect of the successes in the Burmese war soon appeared in the diplomatic relations of the British Government with the Eastern potentates. On 26th July 1826, a treaty of commerce and amity was concluded on very advantageous terms with the King of Siam, whose dominions, hitherto impervious, were opened to British commerce. This event, in itself not immaterial, was rendered doubly important from the satisfaction it gave the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain, and the stop it put to the senseless clamour raised by ignorant and misled persons against any contests tending to the extension of our empire in the East.[1]

1 Thornton, v. 100-104; Martin, 426.

An event of a very painful character occurred in the commencement of the Burmese war, which proved the precarious foundation on which our Indian empire rested, and the necessity of "conquest to existence," as strongly

felt there as by the French Revolutionists or Napoleon in Europe. In September 1824, a dispute arose between the 47th native infantry stationed at Barrackpore and the Government, about the party which was bound to be at the expense of providing bullocks to carry the extra baggage of the sepoys who had been ordered to prepare to march into the Burmese territories. These bullocks had hitherto been always provided at the expense of the sepoys themselves, being in general got in great abundance, and at a small cost, in the country in which they had hitherto been accustomed to carry on war. On this occasion, however, as they were going into a distant and unknown region, the price of these bullocks rose to an extravagant height, and the sepoys maintained, not without reason, that for this extra expense at least they should be reimbursed by the Government. This was imprudently, and, in the circumstances, unjustly refused by the commissariat, which held itself bound by former usage in this particular; and Col. Cartwright, who commanded the regiment, supplied funds from his private fortune to buy the bullocks; and Government, being informed of the circumstance, at length agreed to issue a sum of money to aid in the purchase. These tardy concessions, however, arrived too late to extinguish the spirit of discontent which from this cause, and the general unpopularity of the Burmese war from its being carried on beyond the sea, had seized a large part of the native troops. The men were ordered to parade on the 30th October in marching order, but they refused to obey, and declared they would not go to Rangoon or elsewhere by sea, or march at all by land unless they had double *batta* or marching allowance. Two regiments besides the 47th were ascertained to share these sentiments.[1]

76. Mutiny at Barrackpore. Sept. 15, 1824.

Oct. 30.

[1] Thornton, v. 104-108; Commons' Rep. April 1832, Q. 2151, 2152.

Matters had now reached such a point that the speedy suppression of the revolt was indispensable, at whatever cost of life; for the concessions demanded by justice, if now made, would have been ascribed all over India to

CHAP. XXXIX.

1824.

77. Vigorous suppression of the revolt. Nov. 1, 1824.

fear, and given a fatal blow to the moral ascendancy of Great Britain. In this crisis the conduct of the military chiefs was vigorous and decided. Sir Edward Paget, so famed in the Peninsular wars, arrived from Calcutta, accompanied by the 1st royals, 47th regiment, a battery of light artillery, and a part of the Governor-general's body-guard. The forces intended to act against the mutineers both in front and rear having taken their ground, the latter were informed that their fate would depend on their obedience to the order they were now to receive. The command was to "order arms," which was instantly obeyed; but to the next, "ground arms," a few only yielded obedience. Upon this, on a signal given, the guns in the rear opened with grape, and a few discharges dispersed the mutineers, who were hotly pursued by the dragoons, a few cut down, but great numbers taken, of whom three were executed, and several sentenced to hard labour in irons for various terms. The 47th regiment was erased from the Army List, and the European officers were transferred to the other regiments. Thus terminated this dangerous mutiny, in which, while it is impossible not to admire the courage and resolution with which the danger was at last met, it is to be regretted that the disaffected had, in the outset at least, too good ground for complaint.[1]*

[1] Martin, 423; Thornton, v. 108, 109.

This mutiny evinces the extreme importance of attending with sedulous care to the physical comforts and just

* In all popular movements of this description, the points upon which the parties come into collision are but a part of, and often different from, those which have really occasioned the discontent. The grievances assigned by the mutineers in their memorial to Government, as last presented, were, —1st, Their being required to embark on board ship; and, 2d, The unjust influence of the havildar major in the promotion of the non-commissioned officers in the battalion. The original ground of complaint, which was too well founded in the circumstances, based upon their having been obliged to provide bullocks themselves for transporting their baggage, had been removed by draught animals having been furnished by the Government before the mutiny actually broke out, but not before the discontent originally produced by that cause had reached an ungovernable height. It was the aversion of the native troops to engage in the Burmese war, clothed in their eyes with imaginary terrors, and especially to embarking on board ship for Rangoon, against which they entertained a superstitious horror, which was the real cause of the disorders.—See *Commons' Report*, April 1832, Q. 2151, 2152.

complaints of the troops, as the previous one at Vellore did the peril of violating in any degree, however slight, their religious prejudices. All authorities concur in stating that the sepoys are in general docile and submissive, sober, diligent, observant of their officers, and extremely attached to them when well treated. "No one," says Captain Grant Duff, "who has not witnessed it, could believe how much an officer who understands them can attach the sepoys. They discern the character of an officer even more correctly than European privates, are more disposed than they are to be pleased with his endeavours for their comfort; they even bear to be treated with more kindness and familiarity; but strictness on duty, patiently hearing their regular complaints, and dealing out even-handed justice, are the surest means of securing their respect and attachment." "The sepoys," says Sir Thomas Reynell, "are subordinate; they are patient, and they are obedient to their officers. They are in general well satisfied with their condition, well affected to the service, extremely orderly, and easy of management. Their attachment to their officers is great, if they deserve it. There is no greater punishment you can inflict on a sepoy than to order him to be discharged." With a soldiery of this description government is easy, provided they are justly dealt with, and the religious feelings in which they have been nurtured are duly respected. Mutiny will never rise to a serious height with such men, unless their rulers were in the outset at least in the wrong, into whatever excesses insubordination may afterwards lead those engaged in revolt. But persistance in material injustice, or violating religious feelings, may provoke a spirit which nothing can resist, and which may any day overturn an empire which no external force is able to subdue.[1]

Reflections on this event.

[1] Evidence before Committee, Aug. 16, 1832, App. B.

Simultaneously with the war in Ava, an event of great importance occurred in the interior of India, which tested in a decisive way the military strength and

CHAP. XXXIX.

1824.

79. Commencement of the difference with the Rajah of Bhurtpore.

resources of the Company's government. This was a contest with the State of Bhurtpore, which originated in a dispute concerning the successor of the rajah, who died in August 1823 without issue. The succession was claimed by Buldeo Singh, a brother of the deceased rajah, who got possession, and Doorjun Saul, the son of a younger brother, who claimed as having been adopted by the deceased rajah. The first was recognised by and received investiture from the British Government, but they hesitated to acknowledge his son as heir, though Sir D. Ochterlony, the Resident, urged them to do so. Sir David, however, deeming himself authorised by some general expressions in the Governor-general's despatches, gave investiture to the heir, who was a minor, on 26th February 1825, and soon after his father died. Upon this Doorjun Saul, the young rajah's cousin, collected some troops, and, notwithstanding the recognition of the title of that prince by the British Government, attacked and took Bhurtpore, murdered the infant prince's uncle, and seized the youthful sovereign. Upon this Sir D. Ochterlony, of his own authority, collected as large a force as he possibly could, with a powerful train of artillery, and advanced towards Bhurtpore, in order to vindicate by force the claim of the prince whom the British Government had recognised. These proceedings on the part of Ochterlony were strongly disapproved of by the Governor in council, as tending to induce another war, when the resources of the empire were already strained to the uttermost to maintain that with the Court of Ava, and he gave orders for suspending the march of the troops which had been directed by Ochterlony towards Bhurtpore; and as Doorjun Saul had renounced his intention of usurping the throne, he ordered the troops to return to their cantonments.[1] Sir David, however, entertained serious doubts of the sincerity of these protestations, and deeming the honour of Great Britain implicated in the immediate assertion of its supremacy, he solicited and

[1] Martin, 118; Thornton, v. 118, 135.

received leave to retire. Such was the mortification he experienced from these events that it hastened his death. His last words, as he turned his face to the wall, were, "I die disgraced." *

80. Increased disturbances at Bhurtpore, and interference of the British. Sept. 18, 1825.

However much inclined the Indian Government may have been to avoid a rupture with the Rajah of Bhurtpore, and however harsh their conduct towards Sir D. Ochterlony, an officer to whom they owed so much, the sequel of events was not long in proving that the latter had been right in his anticipations, and that a war with the usurper of Bhurtpore could not be averted if the British ascendancy in northern India was any longer to be maintained. After great procrastination and indecision, betraying the extreme reluctance of the Government to come to a rupture, they at length determined to recognise the title of the young prince, Bulwunt Singh, and to insist on the expulsion of his uncle, Doorjun Saul, from the Bhurtpore state. They thus involuntarily were forced to recognise the justice of Sir David Ochterlony's views on this disputed subject, and drawn into a contest which a prompt support of his vigorous and manly policy would have probably prevented, by inducing submission on the part of the usurping rajah. Now, however, it was not so easy a matter to effect the object, for during the long period of the Governor-gene-

* In justice alike to the British Government and Sir D. Ochterlony, it must be added that they were not slow upon his death to recognise his great merits, both as a soldier and a diplomatist. In a general order, issued by the Governor-general on his death, it was stated, with truth and feeling, "With the name of Sir D. Ochterlony are associated many of the proudest recollections of the Bengal army, and to the renown of splendid achievements he added, by the attainment of the highest military honours of the Bath, the singular felicity of opening to his gallant companions an access to those tokens of royal favour which are the dearest objects of a soldier's ambition. The diplomatic talents of Sir D. Ochterlony were not less conspicuous than his military qualifications. To an admirably vigorous intellect and consummate address, he united the essential requisites of an intimate knowledge of the native character, language, and manners. The confidence which the Government reposed in an individual gifted with such rare endowments, was evinced by the high and responsible situations which he successively filled, and the duties of which he discharged with eminent ability and advantage to the public interest."—THORNTON, v. 135 (note).

CHAP. XXXIX.

1825.

ral's indecision the defences of Bhurtpore had been greatly strengthened, and the discontented had flocked to it from all parts of Hindostan, as the last but impregnable bulwark against the British power. This last opinion had very generally prevailed in India ever since the memorable repulse of the British assault at the close of the Mahratta war, recorded in a former work; and it had acquired so great a moral influence that it had become indispensable, at all hazards, to undeceive the nation on the subject. Even the Governor-general, in direct opposition to his former asseverations to Sir D. Ochterlony, was now obliged to admit this in an official document. "The right of Rajah Bulwunt Singh," said Sir Charles Metcalfe, the new Resident at Delhi, in a letter to the Governor-general, "is unquestioned and unquestionable; and it seems wonderful that with so bad a cause Doorjun Saul should be able to think of opposition to a predominant power, which seeks only to render justice to the lawful prince. But notwithstanding the injustice of the usurpation, which every one admits, he will probably receive support, from the circumstance of his placing himself in opposition to the British Government as the defender of Bhurtpore. It must be known to the right honourable the Governor in council that this fortress is considered throughout India as an insuperable check to our power, and the person who undertakes to hold it against us will be encouraged in his venture by its former successful defence, and by the goodwill of all who dislike our ascendancy, whatever may be the injustice of the cause." [1]

[1] Sir Chas. Metcalfe to Secretary to Government, June 24, 1825; Thornton, v. 151-154.

81. Commencement of the war, and forces of the British. Nov. 25, 1825.

The determination of the British Government being thus in the end taken, a proclamation was on 25th November issued by Sir Charles Metcalfe, denouncing the usurpation of Doorjun Saul, and declaring the intention of the Governor-general to support the pretensions of the youthful and rightful prince. The preparations made were immense, and suited to the magnitude of the enterprise undertaken, upon the success of which it was felt

that not merely the moral influence of the British in India, but the maintenance of their dominion in it was dependent. LORD COMBERMERE, formerly Sir Stapleton Cotton, so well known as a gallant and successful cavalry officer under Wellington in Spain, who had succeeded Sir Edward Paget as commander-in-chief in India, took the command in person of the force advancing against Bhurtpore, which consisted of 21,000 men, including two European regiments of cavalry and five of infantry, with an immense train of 100 pieces of siege artillery, which extended on the line of march, with the reserve parks, to fifteen miles. On approaching Bhurtpore with this formidable force, Lord Combermere, with great humanity, addressed two several communications to Doorjun Saul, offering a safe conduct and safe passage through his camp to the whole women and children in the fortress, which the rajah declined, actuated by the Oriental jealousy of any interference with women, and dreading the same duplicity in his enemies of which he was conscious in himself.[1]

[1] Martin, 427; Thornton, v. 154-157.

82. Commencement and difficulties of the siege.

The former siege, unsuccessfully undertaken by Lord Lake, had demonstrated that the strength of Bhurtpore consisted mainly in its mud walls of tenacious clay, which neither splintered nor crumbled under the stroke of the bullet, and in which missiles of the heaviest description sunk without any serious injury to the works. So formidable had these difficulties been, that repeated assaults of the British had been repulsed with extraordinary loss from the fire of the defences not having been silenced, and the breaches not sufficiently cleared when the attacks were made. So elated had the natives been with this successful defence, that they built a bastion, which they called the "Bastion of Victory," and which they vauntingly declared was formed of the blood and bones of Englishmen. The garrison now consisted of 20,000 men, and 146 guns were mounted on the ramparts. The numbers of the enemy were less formidable than their spirit, for they were composed of Rajpoots and Affghans,

CHAP. XXXIX. 1825.

the most warlike and courageous in India, and they were fully convinced that their fortress would prove impregnable, as it had withstood the assaults of Lord Lake. The siege was looked to with the most intense interest from every part of India, not only from the great amount of treasure which had been brought there as a secure place of deposit from every part of the country, but from the belief generally entertained that it was never destined to be taken, and that against its ramparts the tide of British invasion would beat in vain.[1]

1 Crichton's Siege of Bhurtpore, 150-152; Thornton, v. 156; Martin, 426, 427.

83. Progress of the siege.

Notwithstanding the warning given by the former siege, it was determined to proceed by the ordinary method of approaches by sap, and finally breaching the rampart from the edge of the counterscarp. A sally of 200 horse having been repulsed with heavy loss on the 27th December, and the trenches armed, the advanced batteries opened on the 28th December, and by the 4th January they had produced a visible effect, though so inconsiderable as to suggest doubts with regard to the chances of success by that mode of attack. Fortunately, the commander-in-chief now adopted the suggestions of Major-general Galloway, an officer of great talent and experience in the warfare against mud forts, and Lieut. Forbes of the Engineers, a young officer of uncommon energy and genius,* and resolved to prosecute the siege by means of mines. Under the direction of these skilful engineers, the communication between the wet ditches of the fortress and the tank from which they were supplied was cut off, and the moat having been rendered

* Lieut. William Forbes of the Bengal Engineers, whose great skill in the conduct of the mines was of such service in the siege of Bhurtpore, was the fifth son of John Forbes, Esq. of Blackford in Aberdeenshire, and a lineal descendant by his mother, Miss Gregory, of the eminent James Gregory, the discoverer of the Gregorian telescope and of fluxions, at the same time with Leibnitz and Sir Isaac Newton. He inherited all the mechanical and mathematical genius of his ancestor, and having embraced the profession of arms in India, his talents procured for him at Addiscombe an engineer's appointment, and caused him to be intrusted when he went to the East with the construction, and subsequently with the government, of the mint at Calcutta. The Author has a melancholy pleasure in bearing this testimony to the talents and worth of a highly esteemed relative and early friend, now, like so many others, fallen a victim to the climate of India.

nearly dry, mines were run under it, and one sprung early on the morning of the 7th, though without much effect. A second attempt was made with no better success, the enemy having discovered what was going on, and countermined before any material progress had been made. On the same day an accidental shot from the ramparts set fire to a tumbril, exploded a magazine, and 20,000 pounds of powder were destroyed. Notwithstanding this disaster, the approaches of the besiegers steadily continued, and on the 16th two mines were exploded under one of the bastions with such effect that a large chasm was made in the rampart. To it accordingly the whole fire of the breaching batteries within reach was directed, and with such effect, that before nightfall it as well as another breach were declared practicable, and daybreak on the following morning was appointed for the assault. The attack was to be made in two columns, one headed by General Nicolls with the 59th, another by General Reynell with the 14th. The explosion of a mine charged with 10,000 pounds of powder, which had been run under the north-eastern angle of the bastion, was to be the signal for the assault.[1]

1826.
Jan. 6.
Jan. 8.
Jan. 16.
Jan. 17.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1826, 221, 222; Thornton, v. 156, 157; Martin, 426, 427.

84. Assault of the place. Jan. 18.

At eight on the morning of the 18th the mine was sprung, and with terrific effect. The whole of the salient angle, and part of the stone cavalier in the rear, were lifted in a mass into the air, and fell again with a frightful crash, which caused the earth to quake for miles around, while the air was involved in total darkness from the prodigious volumes of stones and dust which were thrown up as from the crater of a volcano in every direction. Owing to the violence of the explosion, and its having burst in some degree in an unexpected direction, several of the leading files in the front of the stormers were killed or wounded by the fall of the stones, a momentary pause took place in the advance, and Lord Combermere himself, who was far forward, made a narrow escape with his life, two sepoys being killed only two feet in front of him. General Reynell, however, gave

CHAP. XXXIX. 1826.

the word "Forward," and, putting himself at their head, the whole rushed forward over the ruins with such vigour that in a few minutes the breach was carried amidst shouts from the whole army, which were heard above all the roar of the artillery. The left breach, which was attacked by General Nicolls, was more difficult of access, both from the slope being much steeper and the opening not so entire. Notwithstanding all their valour, the 59th regiment, which headed the storm, was obliged for a few minutes to pause near the summit, and a desperate hand-to-hand contest ensued with the enemy, who defended the pass with unconquerable resolution. At length, the explosion of the mine having swept away three hundred of the defenders, and a loud cheer from the rear encouraged the assailants, a sudden rush was made and the breach was carried. The besieged, however, retreated slowly along the ramparts, and turned every gun to which they came on the pursuers; but the latter charged on with invincible vigour, upset or spiked the guns as they were successively carried, and at length, amidst loud cheers, united with General Nicolls' division above the Kombhur gate. Bhurtpore was taken; the bulwark of Hindostan had fallen; Lord Lake's memory was revenged, and the halo of invincibility had again settled round the brows of the victors.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1826, 222, 223; Thornton, v. 158, 159; Martin, 427.

85. Decisive results of this victory.

The immediate consequences of this victory were as decisive as the triumph itself. The citadel surrendered early in the afternoon of the same day; and Doorjun Saul, who at the head of a hundred and sixty chosen horse had attempted to force his way through the besiegers' lines, was intercepted by the able dispositions of General Sleigh, who commanded the cavalry, and made prisoner. All the other fortresses immediately surrendered, and the young rajah, the rightful heir, was seated on the throne, though under the protection of a British resident, in whom the powers of government were substantially vested. The fortifications were immediately destroyed, the principal bastions blown up, and

part of the curtain demolished. Among them was the "Bastion of Victory," built, as they boasted, of the blood and bones of the English soldiers; and this was done by some of the very men who had been engaged in the former siege. These successes were not gained without a considerable loss to the victors, of whom 600 fell in the assault; but this was little compared to the carnage among the besieged, of whom 4000 were lost on that disastrous day. Lord Combermere was deservedly made a viscount for his able conduct of this brilliant siege, and Lord Amherst had recently before been advanced a step in the peerage.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1826, 222, 223; Thornton, v. 163, 169; Martin, 427.

86. Acquisition of Singapore, in the Straits of Malacca. 1824.

The only other event of general importance which occurred during Lord Amherst's administration was the acquisition of Malacca, Singapore, and the Dutch possessions on the continent of India, which in 1824 were ceded to the British Government by the King of the Netherlands, in exchange for the British settlement of Bencoolen, in the island of Sumatra. The situation of Singapore at the entrance of the Straits of Malacca, eminently favourable for commerce, had led to an English factory being established there before it was formally ceded to our Government; and as soon as this was done, a treaty was concluded with the native princes, which further facilitated our growing commercial intercourse with these distant eastern regions. In December 1826 a treaty with the Rajah of Nagpore was also concluded, eminently favourable to British influence in India. Lord Amherst returned to England in March 1828, and was succeeded *ad interim* by Mr Butterworth Bayley, the senior member of the Council, in the duties of government.[2]

Aug. 2.

Dec. 17, 1826.

[2] Thornton, v. 170, 173; Martin, 427.

CHAPTER XL.

INDIA FROM THE FALL OF BHURTPORE IN 1826, TO THE AFFGHANISTAN DISASTER IN 1842.

CHAP. XL.

1826.

1. Consequences of these triumphs in causing an undue reduction of national forces.

THE Burmese war and the capture of Bhurtpore were to our Indian empire what the Peninsular contest and battle of Waterloo were to our European. Both these wars were very protracted, attended with a great expense, and for long of doubtful issue. Both terminated in the establishment of the British power, the one in Europe, the other in Asia, on a solid foundation, and in throwing around it the halo of invincibility, even more efficacious than physical strength in securing the safety and procuring the blessings of peace for nations. Unfortunately, they both led to another result, the natural consequence with short-sighted mortals of the former, and as powerful a cause in inducing danger as that is in averting it. This was a belief that external danger had *for ever* passed away; that the victories gained had rendered future peril impossible; and that the nation, alike in the East and West, might now with safety repose on its laurels, and reap in peace, under a very reduced expenditure, the fruits of the toils and the dangers of war. How far this delusion proceeded in Great Britain, what a lamentable prostration of national strength it occasioned, and what enormous perils it induced, has been fully explained in the former chapter, and will still more appear in the sequel of this work. But the mania of retrenchment was not less

powerful with the Indian government than with the nation and its rulers at home; and as the former was more in presence of danger, and was not encircled with the ocean, which has so often rescued the parent State from the perils induced by its folly, the catastrophe came sooner, and was of a more alarming character, in the East than in the West. The thirteen years of peace which followed the taking of Bhurtpore, were nothing but a long preparation for the Affghanistan disaster in India, as the thirty-nine years' peace which followed the battle of Waterloo in Europe, was for the perils which were averted from the nation only by the heroic valour of her sons in the Crimea.

2. Embarrassed state of the Indian finances.

In justice to the Indian government, it must be added that they had much need of retrenchment, for the cost of the preceding wars had been enormous, and brought the finances of the empire into a very alarming state. The war with Ava in particular, combined as it was in its later stages with that of Bhurtpore, had been attended with a very heavy expense. In the two years of 1824 and 1825, no less than £19,000,000 had been raised by loans; and at the close of the Amherst administration the financial prospects of the country were of a most alarming complexion. A deficit of £1,500,000 existed in the yearly exchequer, and it had then been found, what subsequent experience has too fatally verified, that any attempt to raise the revenue, whether direct or indirect, by augmenting the rate of taxation, not only would be vain, but, by ruining the cultivators, would prove eminently prejudicial. In the Madras presidency in particular, where the "Perpetual Settlement" did not exist, and the ryotwar system admitted of attempts, by exacting increased rents for the land, to augment the public revenue, the ruin induced upon the cultivators had been such as to cause the public revenue to decline in the most alarming manner.[1] Something, therefore, absolutely required to be done, to bring the income and expenditure of the

[1] Wilson's Continuation of Mill, ix. 234; Martin, 428; Thornton, v. 222, 223.

CHAP. XL. 1826.

empire nearer to an equality; and it appeared to the government, that as it had been found to be impossible to augment the former, nothing remained but as much as possible to diminish the latter.

3. No one thought of relaxing the commercial code of India.

Unfortunately for India, there was a third method of remedying the financial difficulties of the country, which it did not enter into the contemplation either of the Government at home or that in India to adopt, probably because it threatened some interests at home, or required an increased expenditure in the first instance abroad; and that was, to increase the capacity of India to bear an increased expenditure, by augmenting the resources of its industry. To do this, however, required the opening of the English market to the produce of Indian industry on the liberal terms of entire reciprocity, and a considerable expenditure on canals and irrigation in India—the first of which thwarted the jealous commercial spirit of Great Britain, while the last ran directly counter to the economical spirit which at that time was so prevalent both with the India Directors and the British Government. No relaxation of our prohibitory protection code, even in favour of our own subjects in Hindostan, was then thought of; and to such a length did this system go in blighting the native industry in India, that it was stated some years after in Parliament, by one of the ablest and best informed men who ever returned from that country, Mr Cutlar Fergusson: "I will take this opportunity of expressing a hope that, while such active exertions are made to extend the manufactures of England, we should also do something for the manufactures of India. At present, our cottons and woollens are admitted into India on payment of a duty of 2½ per cent, while at the same time a duty of 10 per cent is charged upon the manufactures of India imported into Great Britain. A few years ago, in Dacca alone, 50,000 families obtained the means of subsistence by the cotton manufactures, but from the commercial policy this country has pursued with regard to

India, *not one tenth of the number are now employed in this branch of industry.* I trust this system will soon be abandoned, and that articles produced by the natives of India will be admitted into England on payment of a small duty." Such was the effect in the East of the system so much vaunted in this country, whereby the manufacturers of Manchester and Glasgow were able to undersell the weavers of Hindostan in the manufacture of an article which grew on the banks of the Ganges.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. July 22, 1833; Thornton, v. 336.

4. Character of Lord W. Bentinck, the new Governor-general.

Government having decided upon the diminution of expenditure, not the increase of the productive powers of native industry, the most peremptory orders were sent out with the Governor-general who succeeded Lord Amherst; LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK. The character of this nobleman, and the circumstances under which he assumed the reins of power, were singularly favourable to the full development, for good or for evil, of the economising policy. He obtained his appointment in consequence of the connection of Mr Canning with the Portland family, of which he was a younger son; and he left England at a time when economy was the order of the day with all parties, and every successive ministry was striving to outbid its predecessor in the race for popularity, by reductions in the national armaments and consequent relaxation of taxation. His personal character and ruling principles were eminently calculated to give effect to these maxims of government in the boundless empire over which his rule extended. A "Liberal," as he himself said, "to the very core," he had in the close of the war brought the Government into no small embarrassment, when in command in the Mediterranean, by an imprudent and unauthorised proclamation to the Genoese, in which he promised them the restoration of their ancient independent form of government.[2] Without the powerful mind which discerns the truth through all the mists with which popular passion and prejudice so often envelop it, he had respectable abilities, and a great facility in

[2] Hist. of Europe, c. lxxxvii. § 104.

CHAP. XL. 1828.

embracing and carrying out the leading principles of the day. His heart was in the right place. His intentions were always good, his views benevolent, his aspirations after an increase of human felicity; and yet he did more than any one else to endanger our Eastern dominions, and in the end brought unnumbered misfortunes upon it. Such is too often the result of inconsiderate or ill-informed benevolence. Yet are these disastrous consequences not to be ascribed entirely, or even chiefly, to Lord William Bentinck, as an individual; they were the result of the faults of the age, of the opinions of which he was the exponent and instrument rather than the director.

5. His first measures of economy. Nov. 29, 1828.

The new Governor-general arrived at Calcutta in July 1828, and the very first acts of his administration gave an earnest of what was to be the tone of his administration. For above thirty years past, ever since 1796, a dispute had subsisted between the Government at home and the native army in India, called the *half-batta question*. The payment was not of any great amount — not exceeding £20,000 a-year — but several peremptory regulations on the subject had been sent out by the Court of Directors, which had been evaded by successive governors-general, better acquainted than the rulers at home with the wants of, and the necessity of propitiating, the army. Now, however, they had found a Governor-general prepared to carry out their projects of economy to their full extent; and on 29th November 1828, they were promulgated by general orders from the Governor-general, and became law in India. The dangerous consequences of this unhappy reduction were clearly perceived at the time by those best acquainted with the country: Sir Charles Metcalfe and Mr Butterworth Bayley, the members of the Council, regarded it with undisguised apprehension; and the resignation by Lord Combermere of the situation of commander-in-chief, which he had held only four years, was mainly owing to his aversion to the same change. Even Lord W.

Bentinck himself in the end came to be convinced of its inexpedience, for in a minute recorded by him in August 1834, he thus adverted to it: "Trifling as this deduction is upon the aggregate amount of the pay of the Bengal army, it has been severely felt by the few upon whom it has fallen, and has created in all an alarm of uncertainty as to their future condition, which has produced more discontent than the measure itself." But all this notwithstanding, the measure was carried into execution, and produced an amount of irritation and discontent in our Indian army, which might have seriously, and for a mere trifle, endangered the existence of our Eastern empire, if its effects had not been neutralised, as the faults of persons in authority so often are in this country, by the virtue and patriotic spirit of the subordinate officers suffering by the change.[1]

[1] Thornton, v. 216-224; Martin, 428.

6. Farther economical reforms.

This innovation was the harbinger of others of still greater importance in a pecuniary point of view, though not so perilous from the irritation with which they were attended. A "rule of service," as it was called, was introduced into the civil departments, by which, as was most reasonable, the remuneration of the servants was to be regulated in some degree by the time during which they had performed their duties. There can be no doubt that a considerable number of the civil servants in India enjoy large salaries; but they cannot be considered as excessive if the unhealthiness of the climate to European constitutions, and the banishment imposed upon them for a large, and the best period of their lives, is taken into consideration. This change of Lord W. Bentinck's must be considered as just and salutary, because it tended to make the remuneration of civil servants depend in some degree on the length of their services in the employment of the State. But the same cannot be said of another regulation, by which every superior officer, court, and board, was required to make periodical reports on the character and conduct of every person in the employment

CHAP. XL. 1828.

of the Company, a practice which, as tending to establish a universal system of espionage, was generally disliked and soon abolished. Equally questionable was a regulation he made shortly before leaving India, whereby corporal punishment was wholly abolished in the Indian army. That it would be a most desirable thing, if practicable, to get quit of this degrading and inhuman punishment in an honourable profession, is indeed certain, and probably the high social position of the sepoy renders dismissal from the service a punishment extremely dreaded, and which in pacific quarters may enable commanding officers in a great measure to dispense with the lash. But in actual war, and in presence of the enemy, when imprisonment is impossible, and dismissal would only weaken the army, no other punishment will ever be found either practicable or efficacious; and at all events, it was to the last degree impolitic to abolish a punishment in the native ranks which was, and is still, retained for the troops of Great Britain.

7. Immense reduction of the army.

But all other measures of Lord W. Bentinck sink into insignificance when compared with the immense and wholesale reduction of the army, which went on during the whole time that he held the reins of power. So incessant and considerable was this reduction, that the native army in the employment of the Company, which in 1825 had been 246,125, had sunk in 1835 to only 152,938 men, without any increase whatever in the European troops in India, which in both periods were about 30,000.* This immense reduction, amounting to nearly 100,000 men in ten years, took place too when there was no diminution whatever in the dangers of the empire, or in the necessity for a large military establishment, but, on the contrary, a great increase in both from the vast extension of our empire, which daily brought it into contact with a wider circle. All such considerations, so overwhelming to the thinking few, so utterly disregarded

* See Chap. xxxix. § 25, note, where the numbers for each year are given.

by the unthinking many, were drowned in the senseless cry for economy and reduction at any cost, which at that period pervaded the people of Great Britain, and forced itself both upon the Government at home and the East India Company. It must be admitted that these prodigious and sweeping reductions did effect a very great diminution in the expenditure of India, insomuch that, instead of an annual deficit, which the periods of the Pindarree and Burmese wars had exhibited, a surplus was presented, which at the close of Lord W. Bentinck's administration in 1835 amounted to no less than £10,000,000 sterling. But at what price was this treasure accumulated? At the cost of the most imminent peril to the empire, shaken to its foundations by the Affghanistan disaster, and in the fields of the Punjaub.[1]

[1] Thornton, v. 232, 234; Martin, 428, 429.

8. Abstraction of officers of the army to fill diplomatic situations.

A circumstance peculiar to India tended very much to augment the dangers of this great reduction of the military force in that country, and that was the frequent abstraction of officers from the native regiments to fill diplomatic or other civil situations in the service of Government. Economy was the chief motive for this practice: the diplomatic servant was got at a less rate because he continued to enjoy his pay; and it was also thought in many cases that the vigour and decision of a man trained to military duties were more suitable to the semi-military duties of resident at the native courts, than the habits of civilians would be. But with whatever diplomatic advantages such a practice might be attended, nothing is more certain than that it was to the last degree prejudicial to the army. It not only deprived the officers so abstracted of a large part of their military experience, but it rendered them strangers to their men. Neither had confidence in the other, because neither knew each other. That most essential element in military vigour and efficiency, *a thorough trust and confidence between officers and men*, was awanting, when those engaged in the diplomatic service only rejoined

CHAP. XL. 1829.

their regiments when hostilities actually broke out. To this cause, as much as to the great proportion of the native army, which was composed of young soldiers when the war in Affghanistan and the Punjaub broke out, the narrow escape from total ruin is mainly to be ascribed. And to the same cause is to be referred the fact so frequently observed in the later wars in India, that the sepoys were often not to be relied upon, and that they were very different from the veterans of Coote and Clive. They were so because they wanted the essential element of military power in all countries, but above all in Asia, that of a thorough acquaintance and confidence between officers and men.

9. Abolition of the Suttee. May 10, 1829.

When there is so much to lament in Lord William Bentinck's administration, it is consolatory to reflect that there are some particulars to which unqualified praise is due. The first of these is the abolition in the British dominions of the terrible practice of widows immolating themselves on the funeral-pile of their husbands, known by the name of *suttee*. This was effected under Lord William Bentinck's administration by a simple enactment declaring the practice illegal, and subjecting all concerned in aiding or abetting it to the pains of manslaughter. It had the immediate effect of putting an end to this atrocious practice, which has never since been practised, except by stealth, in the British dominions. Contrary to what was generally supposed, this blessed change was effected without shocking the religious feelings of the natives, or disturbance of any kind—a fact which demonstrates that this abominable practice had not its origin in the religious feelings of the country, but sprang from a different and much more impure source. It originated in the selfish cupidity of the unhappy widow's relatives, who inherited her fortune when the sacrifice was consummated, and forced her to submit to it for their aggrandisement.[1] It is to the lasting honour of the British Government, and Lord William Bentinck's administra-

[1] Thornton, v. 235; Martin, 428, 429.

tion, that they put an end to such frightful sacrifices, brought about for such base and selfish ends.

1831.

10. Destruction of the Thugs, 1831.

The other act of wise beneficence, or rather salutary justice, which distinguished Lord William Bentinck's administration, was the destruction of the destructive tribe of *Thugs*, or Phansi-gars, who had long infested some provinces of India. This sect of fanatics, whose principles and practices were such that they would pass for fabulous if not attested by contemporary and undoubted evidence, were for the most part thieves and murderers of hereditary descent, who, without industry, employment, or occupation, lived a wandering life, going about the country robbing unsuspecting victims, whom they immediately after murdered. With such dexterity were their assassinations effected, and so effectually was all trace of them concealed, that hundreds and thousands of unhappy persons perished every year under their hands, no one knew how, and were buried no one knew where. Distinguished by no mark or characteristic from the ordinary inhabitants of the country, they yet formed a fraternity apart, held together by secret signs, oaths, and terror, and whose principles were as fixed for the work of destruction as those of the free-masons are for that of charity. They made no use of daggers or poison in effecting their assassinations; a strip of cloth or an unfolded turban was sufficient to strangle their victim, who was immediately plundered and buried with surprising skill and celerity. The foundation of their creed was the fatal doctrine of necessity, of which they held themselves out as being the mere blind instruments. "Is any man killed by man's killing? Are we not instruments in the hands of God?" was their favourite argument. Having obtained information from some of their number of the principal haunts and ramifications of this terrible society, Lord William Bentinck hunted them out, and ran them down without mercy. From the time when pursuit commenced, in 1830, to 1835, above 2000 of them were seized and tried,

CHAP. XL. 1831.

and either executed, transported, or imprisoned at Indore, Hyderabad, Sangor, and Jubbulpoor. For a time the fanaticism of the sect, and the long impunity which their crimes had enjoyed, sustained them at the judgment-seat and on the scaffold. But at length, when many of the most notorious leaders had been tried and executed, their resolution gave way; numbers purchased a pardon by a full confession. Such as could effect it, sought safety in flight; and at length the confederacy was broken up, and the memory of it, like that of the Old Man of the Mountain in the Lebanon, will survive as one of the darkest and most incredible episodes in human history.[1]

[1] Martin, 429.

Another important change, possibly fraught with great consequences in future times, was the abolition of the forfeiture which formerly existed of civil rights on a proselyte's conversion to Christianity. This was considered a most perilous innovation in a country so subjugated by religious intolerance as Hindostan; but it was introduced with so much caution, and so judiciously worded, that it excited little or no commotion even when first introduced, and when it was most to be apprehended. Probably the professors and teachers of the ancient superstition deemed it so strongly rooted in the prejudices and feelings of the people, nursed by thousands of years' customs, that no danger was to be apprehended to it from any possible facility given to conversion to another and a purer faith. Perhaps, too, the number of creeds—Brahmin, Mussulman, Christian, Jews, Fire-worshippers, and Buddhists,—which pervaded the country, had rendered the inhabitants indifferent to any attempt to introduce a new creed, and incapable of uniting together in any common measures to resist it. Toleration of other creeds, provided their own is not interfered with, is the ruling principle in India, as it must be in all countries inhabited by the professors of many, and successively subjected to the dominion of all. Certain it is, that since these legal impediments have been removed, the progress of Christianity in India has not

11 Removal of the civil forfeitures consequent on conversion to Christianity.

been materially increased, at least among the superior classes, and that the proselytes in the lower, of whom so much is said, are generally looked down upon by their compatriots, and too often enrolled under the banners of the Cross by poverty, necessity, or other motives than the influence of mental illumination. The reason is obvious; they are not fitted to receive it, and will not be so for ages to come. Christianity requires previous mental training. Our Saviour was not sent into the world in the days of Pharaoh, but in those of Cæsar; and when He did appear, it was not in the extremities of civilisation, but in its centre, midway between the arts of Greece and the learning of Egypt, the wealth of Persia and the legions of Rome.[1]

[1] Martin, 429; Thornton, v. 185, 186.

12. Political transactions of Lord W. Bentinck's administration. April 6, 1834.

The administration of Lord William Bentinck being one of external peace, and of a strenuous endeavour to diminish the public expenditure and right the finances of the State, the political transactions of the period, though not without their importance in India, may be summarily dismissed in a work of general history. The most important of them, the deposition of the Rajah of Coorg, and the conversion of his mountainous principality into a province of the Madras presidency, was effected in April 1834. A domestic quarrel with his sister, for whom he entertained a criminal passion, and her husband, which led them to seek the protection of the British Government, and numerous acts of tyranny on his part towards his unfortunate subjects, formed the grounds for this invasion, which was better founded in his misgovernment than in any right of interference on our part. It took place on 6th April 1834, in four divisions, and encountered very little opposition, though the mountaineers were brave and determined, in consequence of the indisposition of the rajah to enter the lists with the powerful Company, which had long been the protector of his family. When possession was taken of the rajah's palace, ample evidence both of the determination and atrocity of his character

CHAP. XL.

1834.

was discovered. Piles of firewood were found in different parts of the building, apparently with the intention of setting it on fire; and the bodies of seventeen persons of both sexes, including three relatives of the rajah, were found in a pit in a jungle. Not a single male of the royal house, except the rajah, had been allowed to survive. His prime-minister, and the chief instigator of these atrocities, was found dead in a wood hanging from the branch of a tree. The deposed rajah became a pensioner on liberal terms of the East India Company, and some years ago came to this country, accompanied by an infant daughter, to whom Queen Victoria had the kindness to stand as godmother. She is educated in the Christian religion—the first link, in high rank, between the native princes and the faith destined one day to overspread the earth.[1]

[1] Thornton, v. 208-215; Martin, 429, 430; Warren, ii. 176, 214.

13. Restoration of the passage to India by the Red Sea.

Political arrangements of some moment took place with Oude, Nagpore, Mysore, Jeypoor, and other small Indian states, which do not deserve a place in general, whatever they may do in Indian history. But an event of the deepest interest to the whole world occurred during this administration—one of the many, and not the least important effects which steam-navigation has bequeathed to the world. This was the opening of the "overland route," as it is called, to India by the Mediterranean, Egypt, and the Red Sea, and the consequent reduction of the period of transit from four or five months to six weeks. So great an advantage in many respects has this change proved, that this has now become the general mode of transit for passengers to India, leaving the passage round the Cape of Good Hope chiefly for sailing vessels laden with cargoes. The first voyage between Suez and Bombay was made by the "Hugh Lindsay" in 1830, and occupied thirty days. It is now usually done in fourteen or sixteen. The effects of this change have undoubtedly been to diminish to less than one half the distance to India,

and augment in a similar proportion the facility of sending troops and supplies to our Eastern dominions. The ease with which two splendid regiments of horse were sent in 1855 from India to the Crimea is a proof of this. Yet is this change not without its dangers, which may come in process of time to overbalance all its advantages. By reducing to nearly a third the time required for corresponding with Hindostan, it has brought the country under the direct control of the East India Company, to an extent which was impossible when the communication could be kept up only by a voyage of five or six months round the Cape. It has thus substituted the government of the many at home, necessarily imperfectly informed, for that of one on the spot, surrounded with all the means of accurate local knowledge. Whether this will eventually prove a change for the better, time will show; but certain it is that our Indian empire has never been in such peril as it has frequently been since it was introduced; and the experience of the Crimean campaign gives no countenance to the idea that a war-council or single will in Paris or London can be advantageously substituted for the unshackled directions of a real commander-in-chief on the spot.

14. Sir Charles Metcalfe's interim government, and liberation of the press in India.

Lord William Bentinck quitted India in May 1835, and was succeeded by Sir Charles Metcalfe, the senior member of the Council in the government of Calcutta. The brief administration of this able and experienced public servant was signalised by a change which at first sight would seem to be of incalculable importance, but which in practice has not been attended by the vast results for good or for evil which might naturally have been anticipated from it. This was the entire removal of the restrictions on the press, which, although seldom enforced, still existed in India. It is remarkable that these restrictions had applied only to Europeans; and accordingly, when Mr Silk Buckingham was removed from India some years before, on account of some intemperance in his published

CHAP. XL.

1835.

writings, his journal was continued by an Anglo-Indian, to whom the power of banishment did not apply. Now, however, all restrictions on the press, whether in the hands of Europeans or natives, were removed by Sir Charles Metcalfe, and the Indian press was rendered, and has ever since continued, as free as that of Great Britain.

15. Reflections on this change.

It is a curious circumstance that Sir Charles Metcalfe, by whom, irrespective of any orders from the East India Company, and even in opposition to their wishes, this great change was introduced, had in 1825 deprecated it in the strongest terms, as tending to enable "the natives to throw off our yoke," and had, in a recorded minute of Council in October 1830, expressed in sharp language the evils attendant on the proceedings of Government finding their way into the public newspapers. The vast alteration made between this period and 1835 in the frame of the monarchy, and the ruling influences at home, can alone account for so remarkable a change of opinion. Experience, however, has now proved that the innovation has by no means been attended with the dangerous consequences which were at first anticipated from it, and that Sir Charles Metcalfe's later opinion was the better founded of the two. Nothing can be more certain than that in an empire of such extent, ruled by foreigners, won and preserved by the sword, numerous abuses in every department must have sprung up, which can only be checked or exposed by a free and independent press. The melancholy fact, which recent times have brought to light, that, in spite of its warning voice, torture is still practised by the native tax-collectors under the English rule in several parts of India, is a sufficient proof of this. The reason why the freedom of the press, though attended with some inconvenience, has been followed by no dangerous consequences as yet, is obvious. It exists in what, to the immense majority of the people, is a foreign and unknown language. Nothing is perilous, in the way

of exciting commotion, but what is intelligible to the masses. The most violent political diatribes may be safely addressed to the people of Germany in English, or of England in French; and however much the demoralising effect of the licentious press of London may be dreaded, no man ever felt any fears from the publication of new editions in the British capital of the works in the original language of Ovid or Aretin.[1]

[1] Martin, 481; Thornton, v. 239-241.

16. Character of Lord Auckland.

Lord Heytesbury was appointed by Sir R. Peel, during his brief tenure of office in the spring of 1835, to succeed Lord William Bentinck. But before he had started for India the change of Ministry in favour of the Whigs took place, and they annulled the appointment, and substituted LORD AUCKLAND in his room, who forthwith proceeded to his destination, and held the office of Governor-general during the next six eventful years. The character of this nobleman, which was amiable and unambitious, seemed well calculated to carry out the pacific policy which the East India Company, with sincerity and earnestness, never fail to impress upon their viceroys. At the farewell banquet given to him by the Company, he said "that he looked with exultation to the new prospect opening before him, affording him an opportunity of doing good to his fellow-creatures, of promoting education and knowledge, of improving the administration of justice in India, of extending the blessings of good government and happiness to India." These were his genuine sentiments; all who heard the words felt that he was sincere. He had no taste for the din and confusion of a camp — no thirst for foreign conquest. Simple and unobtrusive in his manners, of a mild and unimpassioned temperament, of a gentle and retiring nature, he was as anxious to shun as others are to court notoriety. His only object was to pass his allotted span of government in measures of external peace and domestic improvement. Yet under his administration arose the most terrible war in which our Indian empire had ever

CHAP. XL.

1835.

been engaged; under his sway was sustained a disaster as great as the destruction of the legions of Varus! So much is man the creature of circumstances, and so little is the most strongly-marked individual disposition, or that of collective bodies of men, able to control the current of events, in which both, in public life, often find themselves irrecoverably involved.

17. Deposition of the Rajah of Sattara.

The first important measure of Lord Auckland's administration was one little in accordance with these pacific professions, and the morality of which has excited much difference of opinion among the writers on Indian affairs. This was the deposition of the Rajah of Sattara, who had been placed on the throne of his ancestors by the East India Company itself in 1818, and had since governed his subjects, according to their own admission, with moderation and humanity, and engaged in the prosecution of public works of lasting utility. The charge made against him proceeded from a corrupt and vindictive brother, who accused him of the most extravagant designs against the British empire in India, and of having corresponded for a course of years with the Portuguese authorities in Goa, with a view to engage them in an alliance against the British Government, to recover for the rajah the Mahratta territories of which the confederacy had been deprived by Lord Hastings' victories. Extravagant as these projects were, they were distinctly proved to have been entertained by him; and as he was a prince of a weak intellect and very slender information, their absurdity was not so apparent to him as it would be to the worst-informed European. More serious charges were brought against him of having been tampering with sepoy soldiers, and corresponding, in a way hostile to British interests, with the ex-rajah of Nagpore, a man of infamous character and well-known hatred to the Company's government. The result was that Sir James Carnac, the governor of Bombay, required him to sign an acknowledgment of his guilt, and he would be forgiven. He

Sept. 4, 1839.

refused, and was deposed, and the government bestowed on his brother, who had given the information which led to his ruin. More important events, however, were now impending, and Great Britain became involved in negotiations and military operations of the highest importance, and which, in their final result, shook the British empire in the East to its foundations.[1]

[1] Thornton, vi. 82-98; Martin, 432.

18. The North is the quarter from which India is threatened.

THE NORTH is the quarter from which, in every age, the independence of India has been seriously threatened, its plains ravaged, and its dynasties subverted. Twelve times within the limits of authentic and recorded history the Tartars have burst through the snowy barrier of the Himalaya, and descended upon the plains at their feet: the Macedonians in one age under Alexander, the Persians in another under Nadir Shah, have carried their victorious standards over northern India; and even the Affghans have often left their inhospitable mountains, and returned to them laden with the spoils and the trophies of Hindostan. More than half the modern inhabitants of India are the descendants of the savage warriors from the north who in different ages have overspread its territories, and left permanent traces of their victories in the language, the religion, and the customs of their descendants. It is these repeated conquests from the north which is the chief cause of the inability at this time to resist the British power; for the country is inhabited by the descendants of successive conquerors so much at variance with each other, that they cannot now unite even for measures of mutual defence or the maintenance of their common independence. Till a new and more formidable enemy appeared on the ocean in the ships of England, India had never been conquered but from the north, and was ruled by the Mogul princes, the descendants of the chiefs of the last swarm of these dreaded Tartar conquerors.

Persia is the first and most powerful barrier of Hindo-

CHAP. XL.

stan against the irruptions of these northern barbarians. No considerable army can enter India by land but through its territory; and the transit of the stony girdle of the globe which separates its lofty plains from Hindostan, difficult and dangerous at all times, is only practicable to the power which has subdued or is in alliance with Persia. Only two roads practicable for artillery or carriages are to be found in the vast snowy ridge, varying from 18,000 to 25,000 feet in height, which shuts in, over its whole northern frontier, the plains of Hindostan. All the Asiatic conquerors, accordingly, who have aspired to or effected the conquest of India, have commenced with the regions of Khorassan and either the passage of the Bamian Pass, or that which leads from Herat to Candahar; and the route pursued by Alexander from Babylon by Balkh, Cabul, and Attock, or that followed by Timour by Herat, Candahar, and Cabul, are those which all other armies have followed, and which to the end of the world will be pursued by those who are attracted in Asia from its cold and desolate upland plains by the wealth of Delhi, or the warmth and riches of the regions of the sun.

1835.

19. Persia is the chief barrier against the north.

But Persia is not the only state which lies between India and the Asiatic barbarians who constantly threaten it from the north. After leaving the arid and lofty valleys of Khorassan, the traveller, before he enters Hindostan, has to traverse for many a long and weary day the mountains of AFFGHANISTAN. This wild and mountainous region, part of the offshoots of the vast Himalaya range, is for the most part situated to the south of the crest of the ridge. It is a vast quadrangular mass of mountains, containing 5,000,000 of inhabitants, interposed between Northern and Southern Asia. Such is the rugged and impracticable nature of the country, that it can be traversed only in a few valleys, the waters of which descend from the summit of the ridge towards Hindostan, and which from the earliest ages have con-

20. Affghanistan is the next barrier: description of it.

stituted the well-known and only routes from the northward into its burning plains. These roads either pass through Herat, and reach Cabul by Furrah and Candahar, or else cross the Bamian Pass at the upper extremity of the valley of Cabul, and divide in their descent towards Hindostan, some going by the Bolan Pass into the western territories of India, but the chief by the celebrated Khyber Pass direct to Attock on the upper Indus. It is by the latter route that Alexander the Great, Timour, Nadir Shah, and all the great conquerors of India, have penetrated into the country watered by the Indus and the Ganges. The valley in which Cabul is situated, 6000 feet above the sea, is wide, fertile for a mountain region, and abounds with corn, pasture-lands, and the fruits of Europe. But when the road approaches the Khyber Pass, which may be truly called the iron gate of India, it enters a defile above fifty miles in length, often only a few yards in breadth, overhung with terrific precipices on either side, sometimes three or four thousand feet in height, where the mountain-path descends on the edge of a roaring torrent, fed even in the height of summer by the melting of the snows in the mountains above.[1]

[1] Elphinstone's Cabul, c. iii.; Kaye's Affghanistan, i. 11, 12.

21. Character of the Affghans.

Like other mountaineers, the inhabitants of Affghanistan are descended from various races, which, spreading upwards from the adjoining valleys and plains on the south and north, have formed a group of races held together by the strong bond of identity of circumstances and common necessity. Brave, independent, and strongly bound by the ties of family and feudal attachment, they are turbulent and vindictive both to strangers and their own countrymen. Their mutual injuries are many, their feuds still more frequent. Blood is ever crying aloud for blood; revenge is deemed the first of the social virtues; retribution the most sacred inheritance transmitted from father to son. Living under a dry, clear, and bracing climate, but subject to extreme vicissitudes of heat and cold, the

CHAP. XL.

1835.

people are strong and active, and capable of undergoing great fatigue on horseback, the only mode of travelling of which the rugged nature of the country admits. Kindly and considerate to their dependants, the chiefs are served with loyal zeal and devoted fidelity by their clans; and in no part of Asia are the bonds of slavery, whether in the household, the farm, or the tenure, more lightly felt. Hospitable and generous, they receive the stranger without suspicion, and entertain him without stint. In foreign transactions, whether with individuals or other nations, they are often distinguished by the usual fraud and dissimulation of the Asiatics; but when their personal honour is pledged, they have the loyalty and truth of European chivalry. Trade and commerce of every kind are held in utter contempt; they are intrusted to Persians, Hindoos, and Russians, who frequent the bazaars and fairs of Herat, Candahar, and Cabul, and supply the rude mountaineers with the broadcloths of Russia, the spices of India, and the manufactures of Ispahan, to the whole extent required by their simple wants and limited means of purchase.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 12, 13; Elphinstone, i. 36, 49; Conolly, i. 24, 37.

22. General character of Affghan history.

The history of Affghanistan, from the earliest times, like that of most mountainous regions, presents an uniform succession of internal feuds, and perpetual changes both in the order of succession in the reigning families, and the houses in which the government of the different tribes was vested, without the regular hereditary succession and right of primogeniture which have in every age been the main pillars of European stability. Supreme power has generally been the prize of a fortunate soldier, and its loss the penalty of an effeminate inmate of the seraglio. Its boundaries have advanced or receded according as an intrepid and skilful captain has pushed its predatory tribes into the adjoining states, or been subjected to their inroads in his own. Even the great conquerors, whose victorious standards have so often traversed Asia like a whirlwind in every direction, have never made any

lasting change on its government or its fortunes. Every valley sent forth its little horde of men to swell the tide of conquest, and share in its spoils as long as the career of success lasted, and on such occasions Affghanistan had often proved a most powerful ally to the victor. But it never formed a lasting acquisition to his dominions. When the din of war ceased, and the stream of conquest had rolled past, matters returned to their old state; valley was armed against valley, chieftain against chieftain, tribe against tribe; and the Affghans, left to themselves in their barren hills, ceased to be formidable to the world, till a new conqueror roused them to war, to victory, and to plunder.

23. Extent of the Dourance Empire in 1810.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the DOURANEE EMPIRE, which had risen to pre-eminence in these mountain wilds, embraced a very large territory. It consisted of Affghanistan Proper, part of Khorassan, Cashmere, and the Derajat. Bounded on the north and east by immense and inaccessible snowy ranges, and on the south and west by vast sandy deserts, it opposed to external hostility obstacles of an almost insurmountable character. Spreading over the crest of the great range, it extended from Herat on the west to Cashmere on the east, and from Balkh on the north to Shikarpoor on the south. This extensive region was capable, when its military strength was fully drawn forth, of sending 200,000 horsemen into the field; and it was able, therefore, to furnish the most effective aid to any military power possessed of resources adequate to bringing such immense forces into action. But, like all other mountain states, it was miserably deficient in the means of paying, equipping, or feeding them. From its own resources it could not maintain a standing army of more than twelve thousand men, and unless, therefore, it was powerfully supported by some other State capable of supplying this deficiency, it could not be considered as formidable to either its southern or northern neighbours. Like the Swiss or Cir-

CHAP. XL.

1835.

cassians, the Affghans make a trade of selling their blood to any foreign nation which will take them into its pay; and the command of its formidable defiles, the gates of India, may at any time be obtained by the power which is rich or wise enough to take that simple method of gaining possession of these important passes.

24. Threatened invasion of Zemaun Shah, and coalition with the French.

In the close of the last century, when the Dourance empire was at the zenith of its greatness, and the French government, under the guidance of Napoleon, was bent on striking a decisive blow at Great Britain through its Indian possessions, a formidable coalition was not only possible, but within the bounds of probability. Zemaun Shah was at the head of the Affghans, and all the adjacent tribes, whom he had subjected to his dominion. The memory of the last invasion of the Affghans, which had been entirely successful, served to awaken the utmost alarm in India when it was known that he was openly making preparations for the invasion of Hindostan, and about to descend the Khyber Pass at the head of an innumerable host of these formidable mountaineers. In reality, he was in secret urged on by Napoleon, who had, when in Egypt, been in correspondence with Tippoo Saib for the subversion of the British power in India, and since his fall and his own alliance with Russia, had concluded, in 1801, a treaty with the Emperor Paul for an invasion of India by an European army of seventy thousand men, composed one half of French, and one half of Russians. This regular force was to have proceeded by Astrakhan, Herat, Candahar, and Cabul, to Attock on the Indus, and was to have been preceded by Zemaun Shah, at the head of an hundred thousand Affghans. At the approach of forces so formidable, it was not doubted that the whole native powers of India would rise in a body to expel the hated islanders from their shores.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 11, 16; Thornton, vi. 100, 101; Hist. of Europe, c. xxxiii. § 63; Hardenberg's Mem. vii. 497.

Although Marquess Wellesley, to whom the government of India at this period was intrusted, was well aware of the inability of Affghanistan, without external aid, to

invade India, he yet knew what powerful assistance it was capable of rendering to any great power which should attempt that object. He therefore took the most effectual means to avert the danger by entering into close relations with the Court of Persia. With this view he selected a young officer who had been distinguished in the siege of Seringapatam, Captain, afterwards SIR JOHN MALCOLM, who was despatched to Teheran in the end of 1799. With such talent and diplomatic skill did the young envoy, who was thoroughly master of the Oriental languages, acquit himself of his duties, that a treaty, eminently favourable to Great Britain, was concluded soon after his arrival in Persia. He distributed largesses with a liberal hand, and the name of England became great in Iran.* Before this treaty was concluded, the danger, so far as Zemaun Shah was concerned, had been postponed by an internal war in which he had become involved, which had drawn him from Candahar to Herat. By the treaty it was provided, that "should any army of the French nation attempt to settle, with a view of establishing themselves on any of the islands or shores of Persia, a conjoint force shall be appointed by the two high contracting parties to effect their extirpation." Its original conditions further bound the Persian government to "slay and disgrace" any Frenchman intruding into Persia, and in the event of Zemaun Shah attempting to descend upon India from Candahar, to operate a diversion from the side of Herat. This treaty, however, which the French historians justly condemn as exceeding the bounds of diplomatic hostility, was never formally ratified, and soon became a dead letter, so far as Zemaun Shah was concerned. That dreaded potentate was soon after dethroned by one of his brothers, Mahmoud, made prisoner, and his eyes, accord-

25. Treaty with Persia in February 1801.

* "The expense I have incurred is very heavy, and it is on that score that I am alarmed. Not that it is one farthing more than I have, to the best of my judgment, thought necessary to answer, or rather further, the ends of my mission, and to support the dignity of the British Government."—CAPTAIN MALCOLM to LORD WELLESLEY, 26th July 1800. KAYE, i. 8.

CHAP. XL. 1835.

ing to the inhuman Asiatic custom, put out, as Zemaun himself had done to his own elder brother, whom he had dethroned. The blind and unhappy sovereign sought refuge in the British dominions; and the mighty conqueror, who, it was feared, was to follow in the footsteps of Timour or Genghis Khan, sank into an obscure recipient of British bounty in the city of Loodiana, in Hindostan.[1]

[1] Thornton, vi. 100-102; Kaye, i. 9, 10, 26; Martin, 433.

26. Rupture with Persia, and alliance with Affghanistan.

Time went on, however, and brought its wonted changes on its wings both in Europe and Asia. Napoleon, indeed, never lost sight of his design of striking a decisive blow at England through her Indian possessions; conferences on the subject were renewed with the Emperor Alexander at Erfurth, and such was the magic of the mighty conqueror's name, that all the eloquence and gold of Captain Malcolm were forgotten at the Court of Persia. In 1806 a Persian envoy was despatched to Paris to congratulate Napoleon on his victories in Europe, and in 1808 a French mission arrived in Persia, and was received with extraordinary distinction, charged with the task of organising and carrying into effect the long-meditated invasion of India by the combined forces of France and Russia. Lord Minto was the Governor-general, and as Lord Wellesley had sought to establish a counterpoise to French influence in Affghanistan by an alliance with Persia, so now he sought to establish a barrier against Persia in Affghanistan. For this purpose a mission was despatched to Cabul under the Honourable MOUNTSTUART ELPHINSTONE, whose charming work first made the English acquainted with a country destined to acquire a melancholy celebrity in its annals. Mr Elphinstone was very cordially received by Shah Soojah, who had by this time dispossessed his brother Mahmoud in the ever-changeful government of Affghanistan, and a treaty was concluded, whereby that prince bound himself to resist any attempts of the French and Persians to advance through his territories to India.[2]

[2] Thornton, vi. 100-103; Martin, 433; Kaye, i. 10, 56.

Not content with thus rearing up a barrier in Affghan-

istan against the French designs in the East, the British Government endeavoured to counteract their influence in the Court of Persia itself. With this view, two missions were despatched, the first under Sir John Malcolm from India, the latter, headed by Sir Harford Jones, direct from London. The first was unsuccessful, the Court of Teheran refusing to receive the embassy in person, upon which Sir John Malcolm returned to Bombay. But Sir Harford Jones was more fortunate. Before the mission of which he was the head had arrived at the Persian capital, intelligence had been received of the French disasters in Spain in 1808, and their retreat behind the Ebro; and the increased arrogance of Russia, owing to the alliance of the Court of Teheran with France, had revived the ancient and hereditary animosity of the Persians against the Muscovites. Skilfully availing himself of these circumstances, Sir Harford succeeded in entirely neutralising the influence of France at the Court of Teheran, and concluded a treaty, offensive and defensive, between Persia and Great Britain. By this treaty the Persian monarch declared null all treaties previously concluded with any European power; engaged not to permit the passage of any European force through his dominions towards India; and in return England engaged, in the event of his being invaded by any European power, to furnish a military force, or in lieu thereof a subsidy in money, with such military stores as might be necessary for the repulsion of the invading force. Although this treaty was only preliminary, and the definitive treaty, in terms or furtherance of it, was only signed in November 1814, yet it was immediately acted upon, and its first effect was the dismissal of the French mission.[1] The treaty contained two articles regarding Affghanistan, which became of importance in after times. By the first, the Persian government engaged to send an army against the Affghans, to be paid by the English government, in the event of their going to war with that power; by the

Renewed alliance with Persia.

[1] See the Treaty, Nov. 15, 1814; Martin's Sup.; Thornton, vi. 104-107; Kaye, i. 88, 89.

CHAP. XL. 1835.

second, the British were restrained from interfering in any war between the Affghans and the Persians, unless their mediation was desired by both parties.

28. Jealousy of Russia comes in place of that of France in the East.

The stupendous events which occurred in Europe in 1814 and 1815 entirely removed the danger of French invasion of India, which had been so much the object of dread both to the British and Indian government for fifteen years before. But in its stead succeeded the terror of another power, so much the more formidable as it had been victorious in the bloody strife which had so long distracted Europe, and as its dominions lay not at a distance from, but contiguous to, the Persian provinces. Russia had long been an object of apprehension to the kings of Teheran, and that feeling had been greatly increased since the incorporation of Georgia with the Muscovite dominions had brought the standards of the Czar over the Caucasus, and into close proximity with the northern provinces of Persia. The great progress, however, made by the British officers who, after the peace of 1814, had been taken into the Persian service, in equipping and drilling a large body of infantry after the European fashion, inspired the government with an undue opinion of their own strength; and Abbas Mirza, the heir to the throne, deemed himself invincible when he had 20,000 of these fine-looking troops to rely on. Inspired with these ideas, the government of Persia in an evil hour rushed into a conflict with Russia, fondly hoping that they would succeed in wresting Georgia from them, and throwing the battalions of the Czar beyond the Caucasus. The event proved how miserably they had been mistaken. To enable Asiatic troops to rival European, it is necessary to give them not only European discipline, but European OFFICERS. The Persians, defeated in several battles, were compelled to sue for peace, which they obtained only by abandoning the great fortress of Erivan, and their whole defensible frontier towards the north. The territory thus ceded by the treaty of 1828 to Russia was nearly equal in extent

to the whole of England, and brought the Muscovite outposts to within a few days' march of the Persian capital. By this treaty, as Sir Harford Jones justly remarked, "Persia was delivered, bound hand and foot, to the Court of St Petersburg," and its prostration was the more discreditable to Great Britain that the latter power was bound by the treaty of 1814, in the event of a war between Persia and *any European power*, either to send an army from India to assist in its defence, or to pay an annual subsidy of two hundred thousand tomauns during its continuance.[1]

[1] Thornton, vi. 110-116; Kaye, i. 145-147.

29. Progression and rapid advance of Russia in the East.

As the fatal treaty of 1828 was a turning-point in Eastern politics, and for the first time brought England and Russia into scarcely disguised hostility in central Asia, it is material to look back for half a century, and see what the policy and advances of the latter power have been during that period, and what was the necessity which impelled the British Government at length into the perilous Affghanistan expedition. This cannot be so well done as in the words of the able diplomatist who has so long had charge of the interests of England at the Court of Persia: "A reference to the map," says Sir John M'Neill, "will show that, within the last half-century, Russia has advanced her frontier in every direction, and that even the Caspian Sea, which appeared to oppose an impediment to her progress, she has turned to advantage by appropriating it to herself. It will be seen that the plains of Tartary have excited her cupidity, while the civilised states of Europe have been dismembered to augment her dominions. Not content with this, she has crossed over into America, and there disputes, in direct violation of her engagements to England, the right of our merchants to navigate the rivers that debouch on its western coasts. It will be seen that the acquisitions she has made from Sweden are greater than what remains of that ancient kingdom; that her acquisitions from Poland are as large as the whole Austrian empire; that the ter-

CHAP. XL. 1835.

ritory she has wrested from Turkey in Europe is equal to the dominions of Prussia, exclusive of her Rhenish provinces; that her acquisitions from Turkey in Asia are equal in extent to the whole smaller states of Germany, the Rhenish provinces of Prussia, Belgium, and Holland taken together; that the country she has conquered from Persia is about the size of England; that her acquisitions in Tartary have an area equal to Turkey in Europe, Greece, Italy, and Spain; and that the territory she has acquired since 1772 is greater in extent and importance than the whole empire she had in Europe before that time."[1]

[1] Sir J. M'Neill's Progress of Russia in the East, 142, 143.

30. Continued.

"Every portion of these vast acquisitions, except, perhaps, that in Tartary, has been obtained in opposition to the views, the wishes, and the interests of England. In sixty-four years she has advanced her frontier eight hundred and fifty miles towards Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Paris; she has approached four hundred and fifty miles nearer to Constantinople; she has possessed herself of the capital of Poland, and has advanced to within a few miles of the capital of Sweden, from which, when Peter the Great mounted the throne, she was distant three hundred miles. Since that time she has stretched herself forward about a thousand miles towards India, and the same distance towards the capital of Persia. The regiment that is now stationed at her farthest frontier-post on the western shores of the Caspian, has as great a distance to march back to Moscow as onward to Attock on the Indus, and is actually farther from St Petersburg than from Lahore, the capital of the Sikhs. The battalions of the Russian imperial guard that invaded Persia, found, at the conclusion of the war, that they were as near to Herat as to the banks of the Don, that they had already accomplished half the distance from their capital to Delhi, and that from their camp in Persia they had as great a distance to march back to St Petersburg as onward to the capital of Hindostan. Meanwhile the

Moscow Gazette threatens to dictate at Calcutta the next peace with England, and Russia never ceases to urge the Persian government to accept from it, free of all cost, officers to discipline its troops, and arms and artillery for its soldiers, at the same time that her own battalions are ready to march into Persia whenever the Shah, to whom their services are freely offered, can be induced to require their assistance."[1]

[1] Progress and Present Condition of Russia in the East, 1838, 142-144.

31. Great effect of the Turkish war and revolutions in France and England in augmenting the danger from Russia.

The weight due to the important facts stated in this striking passage, and which every one acquainted with history knows to be strictly true, had been much increased, since the termination of the Persian war in 1828, by what had occurred in Europe. The war with Turkey, terminated by the passage of the Balkan and the capture of Adrianople in 1829, had utterly prostrated the strength of the Ottoman power; while the victories of Mehemet Ali, and the ruinous refusal of Great Britain to render any assistance to the Porte to avert his victorious arms from Constantinople in 1832, had of necessity thrown Turkey into the arms of Russia. At the same time, the political changes in Western Europe had gone far to dissolve the ancient alliance between Russia and England, and to foster an angry feeling, from difference of internal government, between two empires already alienated by so many causes of jealousy in the East. The revolution of 1830 had again raised France to the head of the movement party in Europe; that of 1832 had, what was still more marvellous, placed England by her side. Russia, therefore, was impelled into the career of Oriental conquest not less by what she dreaded in the West than what she hoped in the East, and the opportunity appeared eminently favourable for accomplishing both objects; for in proportion as England was assuming a more imperious tone in diplomacy, she was becoming weaker in military strength; and it was difficult to say whether the ruling party in the state was most set upon revolutionising all the adjoining states, or disbanding the

CHAP. XL.

1835.

32. Reflections on the chances of a Russian invasion of India.

forces at home, by which alone revolutionary thrones could be maintained.

Add to this that the difficulties of an overland march to India through central Asia are great, but by no means insuperable. But the Russian march of conquest, especially in the East, renders it a matter of calculation, and its success, if unopposed, a moral certainty. The Court of St Petersburg never trusts anything to chance, or the hazardous accidents of unprepared warfare. It would never sanction an expedition like that of Napoleon to Moscow, or England to Cabul. Slowly but steadily advancing, securing its acquisitions, like the Romans, by the construction of roads and the erection of fortresses, and then successively rendering each conquest the base of operations for the next, it has succeeded for a century past, without experiencing any *lasting* disaster, in advancing its dominion even over the wildest regions in every direction. The march to the Indus is long, the mountains intervening high, the difficulties great; but the distance is not so great, the country not so arid, the wilds not so interminable, as the route to Kamtschatka, which is daily traversed by her troops without difficulty. The Russian system is to impel the lesser states in its alliance into foreign conquest or aggression before they hazard their own troops in it, and to bring the latter up towards the close of the contest, when the first difficulties have been overcome, the opposite parties are well-nigh exhausted, and she may, without serious opposition, achieve decisive success. It was thus that, having subdued Persia by the war of 1827, she made it the platform for future operations, and impelled the Persian forces into an attack on Affghanistan in 1837. Had she succeeded in that, she would have made roads, built fortresses, collected magazines, and organised auxiliary forces in its wild regions, and not attempted a descent on the Indus till the whole physical difficulties had been surmounted, and the pros-

pect of plunder, or the spirit of fanaticism, had brought the whole strength of Asia to her assistance.

1835.

33. Affghanistan remained as the only barrier against Russia.

To counteract the designs of a government guided by such a policy, possessed of such resources, and actuated by such ambition, both political and military, had now become a matter of absolute necessity to the British Government, and the supineness or neglect of former times only rendered this necessity, when Lord Auckland arrived in India in 1835, the more pressing. The war of 1828 had broken down the military strength of Turkey, the treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi had converted what remained of it into an auxiliary force of Russia. The war of 1827 had swept away the barrier of Persia, and it was easy to foresee that in the next conflict in the East the contest would be begun by the Court of Teheran, and the battalions of Russia would be preceded in their steady march towards Hindostan by the desultory forces of the king of kings. Affghanistan, beyond all doubt, would be the next object of attack. Herat, its frontier fortress towards the west, emphatically styled the "Gate of Hindostan," was already designed as the place where the first blow would be struck. To an empire wielding the military strength of sixty millions of men, but only enjoying a revenue of sixteen millions, the prospect of a country where a revenue of twenty-four millions was reaped by its maritime conquerors presented an irresistible object of attraction.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 153-157; Thornton, vi. 123-128.

34. Means by which it might have been retained in the interest of England.

Fortunately, if Affghanistan was the only remaining barrier against Russian influence and aggression, the character of its inhabitants afforded an easy means of retaining them in British interests. Fickle, fond of change, and divided among each other from time immemorial by intestine feuds, there were yet two particulars in which they all united—these were, the love of independence, and the love of money. Against the Persians in particular, their immediate neighbours on the north and west, they entertained the most violent hereditary animosity,

CHAP. XL. 1835.

similar to that felt in former days by the Scotch or the Welsh against the English. To be left undisturbed in their mountain fastnesses, without restraint on their contests with each other, was their great object; but though detesting the yoke of the stranger, they were by no means insensible to the merits of his gold. Inhabiting a barren and churlish land, they sought in vain for wealth in the produce of their own industry; and from time immemorial they had been accustomed to look for it either in foreign conquest, or the subsidies of foreign powers. In this money contest England had decidedly the advantage of Russia: her Indian possessions alone yielded a revenue a half greater than the whole territories of the Czar put together. The obvious way of dealing with such a people, therefore, was to make no attempt to penetrate into their country, or coerce them by military force, but to attract them by the certain magnet of gold. It was the more easy to do this that the magnificent largesses of Mr Elphinstone in former days at Cabul, and of Sir John Malcolm in Persia, had diffused the most unbounded ideas of British riches and generosity in all central Asia, and the arrival of every envoy from the government of Calcutta awakened a fever of cupidity in the country, which was capable of being turned to the best advantage. An hundred or two hundred thousand a-year judiciously applied to the Affghanistan tribes would have retained them all in British interests, not endangered the life of one man, and effectually closed the Gate of India against Russian ambition.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 13-16; Thornton, vi. 124-130.

35. State of Affghanistan at this time.

The peculiar circumstances of Affghanistan, when it first became in a manner the battle-field between Great Britain and Russia, were eminently favourable to the establishment of this steadying money power of the former among its desultory tribes. Zemaun Shah, as already observed, had been deposed and blinded by his brother Mahmoud in 1801; and he, in his turn, had been deposed, though, with unwonted clemency, not deprived of sight, by

a still younger brother, SHAH SOOJAH-OOL-MOOLK, whose name acquired a melancholy celebrity in the events which followed. But Shah Soojah, a violent and ill-starred though ambitious man, was unable to keep the throne he had gained; and he was, after a short reign, dispossessed of the throne by Mahmoud, who reasserted his rights, and obliged to take refuge at the court of Lahore, which had recently become famous from the ambition and rise of RUNJEET SINGH, whose abilities and energy had raised a small tribe to the rank of a powerful empire on the banks of the Sutlej, in northern India. He brought with him from his lost kingdom the famous KOH-I-NOOR diamond, esteemed the largest in the world, which was immediately wrested from him by his ruthless and unscrupulous host, Runjeet; and now the trophy of victory adorns the brow of our gracious sovereign, Queen Victoria.[1]

[1] Martin, 433; Thornton, vi. 96.

36. Subsequent adventures of Shah Soojah, and his vain efforts to regain his throne.

The subsequent adventures of Shah Soojah, as detailed in his own autobiography, in his efforts to regain his throne, exceeded anything which fiction has imagined of the marvellous. By a wonderful exertion of skill and resolution, he succeeded in making his escape in the disguise of a mendicant from the prison into which he had been thrown by Runjeet Singh, and after undergoing great hardships, reached, in 1816, the British station of Loodiana, where, like his brother Zemaun Shah, he became, with his family, a pensioner on the bounty of the East India Company. Mahmoud, however, did not enjoy the throne of Affghanistan long. As is often the case in Eastern story, he became the victim of the ambition and treachery of his vizier, Futteh Khan, who had been mainly instrumental in effecting the late revolution in his favour, and who was desirous of making his own clan, the Barukzye, the governing power in the country. His youngest brother, DOST MAHOMMED, who afterwards became still more famous in British history, treacherously made himself master of the city of Herat, and even insulted some ladies of high rank in the harem of the

CHAP. XL.

1835.

governor of that place. Upon this he was attacked by Prince Kamran, the son of Mahmoud Shah, and forced to take refuge in Cashmere, where his brother was governor. Futteh Khan, the treacherous vizier, was subsequently made prisoner, and cut to pieces in the presence of the king and prince because he refused to order his brother to surrender. But this success was of short duration. Dost Mahommed, who was a man of uncommon energy and resolution, and extremely beloved by the hill-tribes, raised an army, and, advancing against Cabul, made himself master of that capital, from which Mahmoud Shah and his son Kamran fled to Herat, which still acknowledged their sovereignty, and established themselves in that fragment of the Douranee empire. But Dost Mahommed succeeded in maintaining himself in Cabul and the central provinces, where he was extremely beloved, and where his government, as that of firm and intrepid men always does in the East, was found to be a perfect blessing to the people. Shah Soojah made several unsuccessful attempts, like Henry VI. in English story, to regain his lost inheritance, but they were all shattered against the superior capacity and fortune of the successful occupant of the throne. The provinces which acknowledged the sway of Dost Mahommed were those of Cabul, Bamian, Ghuznee, Candahar, Ghouband, and Jellalabad, but a part, it is true, of the old Douranee empire, founded by Ahmed Shah, half a century before, but the most important, as lying in its centre, and commanding the whole passes from Persia into India.[1]

[1] Martin, 433; Thornton, vi. 124, 154; Kaye, i. 17, 31.

37. Policy which should have been pursued was to support Dost Mahommed.

In this distracted state of the Affghanistan empire were to be found the certain and easy means of establishing, not British government or rule, but British influence, in the whole hill-country beyond the Indus. The people were so divided by the successful usurpations which had taken place that they had ceased to be formidable as enemies, while the reigning heads of the clans which were

disputing, and had in different places obtained the supremacy, were so insecurely seated on their thrones that British countenance and British gold were alike important to their success. To Dost Mahommed, in particular, our alliance was of inestimable importance, as he was a usurper who belonged to a different and rival clan from that which had before possessed the throne, and though supported, as Napoleon was in France, by the great majority of the people, he had to contend with a dispossessed party, which would make every effort to regain it, and an indefatigable pretender, who, like the unfortunate Charles Edward in Scottish story, was hovering round the kingdom in search of a place to effect an entrance. He accordingly was most anxious to cultivate the British alliance, and a trifling annual subsidy would to a certainty have secured him in our interests.[1]

[1] Thornton, vi. 124; Kaye, i. 37-42.

38. Russian designs on Herat.

While these obvious considerations promised a ready sway over Dost Mahommed to the British Government, another circumstance equally bound Kamran, the Shah of Herat, then belonging to the rival house, in our interests. Persia, which had now, since the peace of 1828, been the mere vassal of Russia, laid claim to a sovereignty over this city and its dependencies, founded partly on the conquests of Nadir Shah, partly on a payment of tribute for a considerable period to the Shah of Persia by Kamran, the present ruler of Herat, and partly on some engagements entered into by that prince while the Shah of Persia was employed in reducing Khorassan to obedience. The claim laid extended to all Affghanistan, as far as Ghuznee, and included Cabul. Great Britain, however, was debarred by the 9th article of the existing treaty from interfering between the Persians and Affghans, unless called on by *both* parties; a thing which was not very likely to occur, when the former was entirely under the direction of Russia. The Shah of Persia was resolved to make good his claims by force of arms, and the ruler of Herat was equally determined to resist him.

Aug. 3.

CHAP. XL.

1836.

Russia incessantly urged Persia into this contest; Muscovite officers were largely employed in drilling the Persian armies; Muscovite engineers in directing their artillery; and under the name of "Russian deserters," a regiment of its troops was openly employed in the Persian service, and was much superior in discipline and equipment to any force which the Affghans could bring against it. In impelling its vassal, Persia, into this war, Russia was only following up its usual policy, which was to precede its own conquests by the arms of its dependants, as a general pushes forward his tirailleurs before he brings the masses of regular troops into action. In this extremity the Shah of Herat naturally looked to Great Britain for protection, the only power capable of counterbalancing the Czar in central Asia; and thus, while the uncertainty of his tenure of the throne naturally inclined Dost Mahommed to our alliance, the imminent hazard of subjugation by Persia, backed by the Colossus of the North, was equally sure to retain the ruler of Herat in our interests.[1]

[1] Mr Ellis to Lord Palmerston, Jan. 1836; Thornton, vi. 124, 125.

39. Kingdom of the Sikhs.

The only drawback to this generally auspicious state of things on the side of Affghanistan consisted in the rival pretensions of a new State, which had recently risen to eminence in the Punjaub. This was the kingdom of the SIKHS. This remarkable tribe had long been known on the banks of the Sutlej, and in customs and religion differed considerably from any of the adjoining ones. It had never, however, attained to remarkable eminence, or been considered as one of the great powers of India, till its direction fell into the hands of a chieftain of talents and energy, RUNJEET SINGH. This sagacious and indefatigable man, observing attentively the course of events for the last half-century between the British and the native powers, whom they successively vanquished, arrived at the conclusion that these hated islanders were for the time invincible, and that the only way in the end to rear up a barrier to their conquests, was in peace and silence to form a military force, disciplined after the European

fashion, capable of bringing into the field an army equal to their own. For this purpose he offered the greatest encouragement to French officers to settle amongst his people, and intrusted them with the entire direction of his military forces. But it was the disbanding of so large a part of the sepoy force by Lord William Bentinck, in pursuance of the economical ideas of the day, which was one great source of Runjeet Singh's military strength. Many of those whom he disbanded took service with the Sikh chief, who thus acquired an army of old British soldiers, directed by French officers, and trained to the very highest point of discipline and steadiness in the field.

40. Jealousy and wars between the Sikhs and the Affghans.

Had it been possible to have united the Sikhs with the Affghans in the British alliance, they would have formed a barrier impenetrable alike to the bayonets and the intrigues of Russia, and which, by the vast armies and the still vaster revenue of the British in India, might have bid defiance to the world. But, unfortunately, this was very far indeed from being the case. Runjeet Singh had taken advantage of the distracted state of the Douranee empire, in consequence of the civil dissensions which have been mentioned, and by the aid of his numerous and disciplined battalions had succeeded in wresting from its chief the whole province of Peshawur, being the part of Affghanistan which lay next to India, and which was the more valuable as nearly a moiety of the whole revenue of the old Affghanistan empire had been derived from its inhabitants. This invasion was justly regarded as an unpardonable offence by Dost Mahommed and the other rulers of Affghanistan, and they had nothing so much at heart as to regain this lost portion of the inheritance of their fathers. But Runjeet Singh was equally determined to retain it, for, next to his capital Lahore, it formed the brightest jewel in his crown. Thus the seeds of rancorous hostility and interminable jealousy were sown between these two powers, both of whom lay on the direct route from Russia to India, and

CHAP. XL. 1837.

the alliance of either of which would be of essential importance either to the English in defending, or the Russians in forcing an entrance into that country. To conciliate both was scarcely possible, and the great point for consideration was, which was most likely to prove of service to our interests, and which could most be relied on in the contest with the great northern power which was evidently approaching.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 17, 34; Thornton, i. 124-126; Martin, 434.

41. Russian intrigues at Cabul.

The war of artillery, however, was preceded, as usual in such cases, by the strife of diplomatists; and there the ability of the Muscovites appeared more clearly than in their military operations. The Russian government despatched a confidential agent, named Vickovich, to Cabul, who was fortified by a holograph letter* from the Czar himself. He arrived in Cabul on the 19th December 1837, ostensibly as a commercial agent, really to carry out the diplomatic instructions given him by Count Simonich, the Russian minister at Teheran, in the middle of September. Before his arrival, however, the British Government had sent Captain, afterwards Sir Alexander Burnes, on a similar mission to the court of Cabul, ostensibly for commercial, really for political purposes. The British envoy had been received in the most favourable manner by Dost Mahommed, who made no secret of his anxious wish to enter into the most friendly relations with the British Government, and upon the promise of such a

* "A. C.—In a happy moment the messenger of your highness, Mirza Hassan, reached my court with your friendly letter. I was very much delighted to receive it, and very much gratified by its perusal. The contents of the letter prove that you are my well-wisher, and have friendly opinions towards me. It flattered me very much, and I was convinced of your friendship to my everlasting government. In consequence of this, and preserving the terms of friendship which are now commenced betwixt you and myself, in my heart I will feel always happy to assist the people of Cabul who may come to trade in my kingdom. On the arrival of your messenger, I have desired him to make preparations for his long journey back to you, and also appointed a man of dignity to accompany him on the part of my government. If it please God he arrives safe, he will present to you the rarities of my country, which I have sent through him. By the grace of God may your days be prolonged.—Sent from St Petersburg, the capital of Russia, on the 27th April 1837, in the 12th year of my reign."—KAYE, i. 201, note.

subsidy annually paid as would enable him to maintain his position, to enter into an alliance offensive and defensive with them. Fifty thousand pounds a-year was all he demanded; a trifle in England, but a very great sum in those parts, as his whole revenue was only fifteen lacs of rupees, or £150,000 a-year. So great was the influence of the British diplomatist, and so strong the desire of the Affghan chief to cultivate the British alliance, that he at first, on learning of the Russian envoy's approach, despatched orders to prevent him from entering the city; and when he did arrive, he immediately sent for the British agent, and declared his determination not to receive overtures of any sort from any other power, as long as he had any hope of sympathy or assistance from the British Government.[1] *

[1] Kaye, i. 186-188; Thornton, vi. 127.

42. Miserable policy pursued towards Dost Mahommed by Lord Auckland.

Unfortunately, the policy of the British Government, and the powers committed to their envoy at Cabul, were very little calculated to improve these friendly dispositions. The days were those of economy and retrenchment; and anything appeared to be preferable to incurring at the moment any outlay which could possibly be avoided. The presents he brought for the chief and the ladies of his zenana were trifling and contemptible, and

* "On the morning of the 19th, Dost Mahommed came over early from the Bala-Hissar, with a letter from his son, the governor of Ghuznee, saying that the Russian agent had arrived in that city on his way to Cabul. Dost Mahommed said he had come for my council on the occasion; that he wished to have nothing to do with any other power than the British; that he did not wish to receive any agent of any power whatever, as long as he had a hope of sympathy from us; and that he would order the Russian agent to be turned out, detained on the road, or act in any way I desired him. He gave me up all the letters, which I sent off express to Lord Auckland."—Sir A. Burnes to Governor-general, 19th December 1837. Kaye, i. 188, 189.

"Nothing could have been more discouraging than the reception of the Russian agent. Dost Mahommed still clung to the belief that the British Government would look favourably on his case, and *was willing to receive a little from England rather than a great deal from any other power.* But he soon began to perceive that even that little was not to be obtained. Before the close of January, Burnes had received specific instructions from the Governor-general, and was compelled, with the strongest feelings of mortification and reluctance on his part, to strangle the hopes Dost Mahommed had so long encouraged of a friendly mediation of the British Government between the Ameer and Runjeet Singh."—Kaye, i. 190, 191.

CHAP. XL. 1837.

painfully contrasted with the magnificent gifts which during the former mission had been lavished with so unsparing a hand by Mr Elphinstone, and spread such magnificent ideas of British grandeur and generosity. The envoy was empowered to promise nothing, engage for nothing; and although accurately informed by him of the imminence of the danger, and that it was a neck-and-neck race between England and Russia, neither a man nor a guinea was tendered to the chief who held the keys of India in his hand, and could avert calamities unnumbered from the British empire.* Peshawur undoubtedly made a difficulty, as it was claimed and eagerly sought both by the Affghan and Sikh chiefs, and it was no easy matter for the English Government to reconcile their contending interests; or retain them both in our alliance. But such was the anxiety of Dost Mahommed to preserve the most amicable relations with the British Government, that by the promise of a very moderate subsidy from them, he might easily have been induced to forego his demand for the disputed province, and remain steady in the British alliance,[1] without urging claims which might have compromised our relations with

[1] Kaye, i. 190-192; Captain Burnes to Governor-general, Jan. 26, 1838.

* "We are in a mess here—Herat is besieged, and may fall, and the Emperor of Russia has sent an agent to Cabul to offer Dost Mahommed money to fight Runjeet Singh. I could not believe my eyes or ears, but Captain Vickovich (that is the agent's name) arrived here with a blazing letter three feet long, and sent immediately to pay his respects to me. The Ameer (Dost Mahommed) came over to me sharp, and offered to do as I liked—kick him out, or anything; and since he was so friendly, I said give me the letters the agent has brought, all of which he surrendered sharp." — BURNES' *Private Correspondence*. KAYE, i. 189.

Mr M'Neill's opinion, who wrote from the court of Persia, was equally clear. "Dost Mahommed Khan, with a little aid from us, could be put in possession of both Candahar and Herat. *I anxiously hope that aid will not be withheld.* A loan of money would possibly enable him to do this, and would give us a great hold upon him. He ought to be precluded from receiving any other foreign representatives or agents of any kind at his court, and should agree to transact all business with foreign powers through the British agent. *Unless something of this kind is done, we shall never be secure*; and until Dost Mahommed Khan, or some other Affghan, shall have got both Candahar and Herat into his hands, our position here must continue to be a false one."—MR M'NEILL to CAPTAIN BURNES, March 13th, 1837 (MS. records).

Runjeet Singh.* But, unhappily, Lord Auckland's policy was entirely different; and before the end of January, Captain Burnes received positive instructions, which compelled him, to his bitter mortification, to strangle the sanguine hopes which Dost Mahommed had long entertained of receiving assistance from Great Britain, and in a manner forced him to throw himself into the arms of the Emperor of Russia.

43. Liberal promises of the Russian agent.

The Russian envoy was by no means equally parsimonious in his professions or guarded in his promises. He informed Dost Mahommed that he was commissioned to express the sincere sympathy of the Russian government with the difficulties under which he laboured; that they were willing to assist him in expelling Runjeet Singh from Peshawur, and would furnish him with money for that purpose, and renew it annually, expecting in return the chieftain's good offices. Even the mode of conveying the much-coveted treasure was specified; the Russians engaging to send it to Bokhara, whence Dost Mahommed was expected to convey it to his own capital. At the same time, the combined intrigues of Russia and Persia succeeded in effecting a treaty with the rulers of Candahar, by which they engaged to transfer to them the city and territory of Herat, to be held for a tribute to the Shah of Persia. This treaty was guaranteed by Count Simonich on the part of Russia, in the following terms: "I, who am the minister-plenipotentiary of the exalted government of Russia, will be guarantee that neither on the part of the Shah of Persia, nor on the part of the powerful Sirdars, shall there be any deviation from, nor viola-

* "It appears to me that the opinions of Dost Mahommed call for much deliberation. It will be seen that the chief is not bent on possessing Peshawur, or on gratifying an enmity towards his brothers, but simply pursuing the worldly maxim of securing himself from injury. The arguments which he has adduced seem worthy of every consideration, and the more so when even an avowed partisan of Sultan Mahommed does not deny the justice of the Ameer's objection."—CAPTAIN BURNES to GOVERNOR-GENERAL, 26th January 1838. KAYE, i. 194, note.

CHAP. XL. 1837.

tion of, this entire treaty and these agreements." Thus did the Russian government, in pursuance of its usual policy, push forward the lesser states in its alliance, or under its influence, to precede its disciplined battalions in the career of conquest, and pioneer the way for its eagles in their march; and thus skilfully did it take advantage of their separate designs and ambition to effect an object from which itself in the end was alone to profit. To the Shah of Persia it promised the sovereignty of Herat as the reward of its reduction; to the Candahar chiefs, the possession of that city, subject to the suzerainty of Persia; and to Dost Mahommed money to enable him to recover Peshawur from the Sikhs, and regain that lost appendage of the Douranee empire. And the object of all this complicated diplomatic intrigue was to subject Herat, Cabul, Candahar, and Peshawur to its influence, and thus secure the co-operation of the rulers in all these cities, the keys of the mountain-regions, in its grand design of advancing its dominions to the banks of the Indus.[1] *

[1] Thornton, vi. 127-129; Kaye, i. 194-197.

44. Siege of Herat: description of it.

HERAT was the place which became the first object of attack in pursuance of these complicated negotiations. "Surrounded," says an eyewitness, "by a fair expanse of country, where alternating corn-fields, vineyards, and gardens vary the richness and beauty of the scene, and the bright waters of small running streams lighten the pleasant landscape, lies the city of Herat." The eloquent words of Captain Conolly apply only to the beauty beyond the walls—within them, as in most Asiatic towns, all is dirt and desolation. But in a military point of view it is a position of the very highest importance. An army composed of foot and horse only, with a few pieces of light

* "The Russian ambassador, who is always with the Shah, sends you a letter which I enclose. The substance of his verbal message to you is, that if the Shah does everything you want, so much the better; and if not, the Russian government will furnish you with everything wanting. The object of the Russian envoy by this message *is to have a road to the English*, and for this they are very anxious. He is waiting for your answer, and I am sure he will serve you."—Agent of Cabul to DOST MAHOMMED, January 14, 1838, No. 6, *Correspondence regarding Affghanistan, laid before Parliament.*

artillery, might traverse some of the passes, seventeen thousand feet in height, which intersect the stupendous range of the Hindoo Coosh; but one equipped with heavy artillery, and all the cumbrous appliances of modern war, can make its way by no other route from the north-west to the Indian frontier. The city stands in a rich plain lying at the foot of the mountains, the extraordinary fertility of which, especially in grain crops, has led to its being styled the "granary of central Asia." It presents, therefore, every advantage for the collecting of provisions and formation of magazines, to facilitate the transit, in the desolate mountain region which lies beyond, of a large army. The city itself contains about 45,000 inhabitants, and stands within four solid earthen walls, each about a mile long, which environ it in the form of a square. These walls, however, when the Persian army approached them, were in a very decayed state. The real defence of the place consisted in two covered-ways, or *fausse-brayes*, one in the inside, and the other in the outside of the ditch. The lower one was on the level of the surrounding country, its parapet partly covered by a mound of earth on the counterscarp formed by the accumulation of rubbish from the clearings of the ditch.[1]

[1] Pottinger's Report to the Supreme Government of India; Kaye, i. 203-205; Conolly, 19-22.

When the Persian army, directed by Russian officers, and supported by a Russian battalion under the name of "Deserters," approached the city, it was nominally under the rule of Kamran, the only one of the royal family who retained a part of the former Affghan monarchy. Worn out, however, by the debility induced by every species of excess, he was himself incapable of carrying on the government, which had entirely fallen into the hands of his vizier, Yar Mahommed, an able and energetic, but unprincipled and profligate man, whose son was the governor of the city. The terms which the Persian shah offered to Kamran were, that he was to be deprived of the title of king; a Persian garrison was to be received into the city, where coins were to be struck in the name,

45. Commencement of the siege. Sept. 17, 1837.

CHAP. XL. 1837.

and prayers offered for, the Persian king. On these conditions the Affghan chief was to be allowed to retain the government, and he was to join his forces to the Persian army and that of Dost Mahommed, and make war on the Sikhs. These terms were indignantly rejected by the Affghans; the old animosity at the Persians revived in full force; a general enthusiasm seized the people, and they prepared with resolute determination to maintain their independence. But their forces were small, their guns few and ill manned, their ramparts crumbling in decay; and all their efforts would probably have been unavailing, had it not been that on the day when the king made his public entry into the city to direct the war, a young English officer was in the crowd which assembled to witness his arrival, who soon acquired the lead in the defence which heroism and talent never fail to obtain in presence of danger—ELDRED POTTINGER.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 209-213.

46. The siege.

The Persian army advanced in three divisions, the foremost of which, 10,000 strong, appeared before the walls in the end of October. The fortress would not have held out a fortnight against an Anglo-Indian army of half the force; but the Persian army, though 30,000 strong when it all came up, contained few real soldiers, and was, with the exception of the Russian battalion, in a very rude and disorganised state. The inhabitants made a noble defence; and Yar Mahommed exerted himself with surprising vigour to stifle discontent and provide the means of resistance. Ground was broken before the fortress on the 23d November; but the progress of the siege was for long very slow, although the fire even of the light artillery of the Persians brought down the rotten parapets like tinder. Sallies were made daily; and Eldred Pottinger, the real hero of the place, diffused into the breasts of all around him his own dauntless intrepidity. Under his command the operations of the besieged became not only energetic but skilful. The breaches were repaired as fast as they were made; in

Nov. 23.

vain the flaming tempest descended on the inhabitants in their houses. The people bore the conflagrations which ensued with a constancy worthy of the highest admiration; and though often despairing of the result, continued with mournful firmness to assert their independence.[1]

1838.

[1] Kaye, i. 219-221.

47. Progress of the siege. April 18.

The siege continued in this manner during the whole winter, without any material progress being made, except in the destruction of the houses in the town, accompanied with a melancholy loss of life. "Scarcely a shop," says Pottinger, "had escaped destruction; the shutters, seats, shelves, nay, even the very beams and door-posts, had been torn down for firewood; most of the houses were burnt or unroofed; scarcely any business was going on; here and there were gathered knots of pale and anxious citizens whispering their sufferings." Notwithstanding these discouraging circumstances, the defence was continued with a constancy unsurpassed in ancient or modern times; and the Affghans, leaving their walls, even made some successful sallies with their formidable horse upon the enemy. During the siege, Mr M'Neill, the British minister at the court of Teheran, came up to the Persian headquarters, and exerted his great diplomatic abilities to effect an accommodation, but in vain. On 18th April the fire of the besiegers was extremely violent, and the breaches on the east and north were declared practicable. The old walls were sliding down at every round. But instead of waiting for the assault which was on the point of being delivered, the Affghans themselves leapt over the parapet, streamed down the breaches, and, after a desperate hand-to-hand encounter, drove back the assailants at all points.[2]

[2] Kaye, i. 236, 245.

48. Final assault. June 24.

The 24th June was the most memorable day in the siege, for the final assault took place on that day. With characteristic supineness, although the signs of what was approaching were sufficiently evident, the garrison were off their guard. The vizier, Yar Mahommed, was at his quarters—most of the sentinels were asleep. Suddenly,

CHAP. XL.

1838.

at the signal of a discharge of a rocket from the Persian headquarters, five columns leapt out of the trenches and advanced to the assault of as many breaches. At four the assailants were repulsed; but at the fifth the stormers, gallantly led by their officers, succeeded in forcing the lower fausse-braye, where the defenders fell to a man. Encouraged by this success, they pushed up the slope, and after a brief but desperate struggle, the upper fausse-braye was also carried, and a few of the most daring assailants gained the top of the breach. They there met the Affghan reserve, which, by a violent rush, succeeded in driving the assailants down. Again they returned to the charge, again they were hurled down by the dauntless defenders. The conflict was fierce, the issue doubtful. Roused by the tumult, the vizier rode down towards the breach accompanied by Eldred Pottinger; but the heart of the Asiatic quailed before the terrors of that dreadful moment, and he could not be prevailed on to go to the spot where the terrible conflict raged. Not so the European: in that trying hour the West asserted its ancient superiority over the East. Eldred Pottinger's resolution never failed, and at length, partly by energetic appeals to his honour, partly by actual force, the vizier was brought up by Pottinger to the men as they were retiring from the breach, and they were rallied and led again to the conflict. Headed by the Englishman, and impelled forward by the vizier, who belaboured with a huge staff the hindmost of the party, the Affghans returned to the charge, and, leaping over the parapet, rushed out upon the stormers. The Persians, who were advancing with loud shouts in the full confidence of victory, were seized with a sudden panic on this unexpected onset, and fled headlong down the breach, where they were almost all slaughtered by the yataghans and bayonets of the Affghans. The crisis was over—the fortress was saved.[1] The advance of Russia in central Asia was arrested by the heroism and conduct of one man,

[1] Kaye, i. 262-264; Pottinger's Journal.

who inspired into the sinking hearts of the garrison a portion of his own indomitable resolution.*

The fate of Herat was, in reality, determined on this day; but the besieged were ignorant, as is often the case in desperate actions in war, of the magnitude of their own success, and retired in sorrow and mourning from the scene of their decisive triumph. The loss the Affghans had sustained was very great: gloom overspread their spirits, despair had seized on the bravest hearts. The Persians had lost 1700 men in the assault, the Affghans not more than half the number; but it was more severely felt, as their numbers were so much less considerable. Provisions also had become extremely scarce; the people were dying of famine in the streets; ammunition was beginning to fail, medical assistance and resources of all kinds were no longer to be had. The soldiers clamoured for bread or money, and increased the sufferings of the wretched inhabitants by breaking into and ransacking the houses, and torturing the persons of such as they suspected of having stores of either concealed. The blockade, which for long had been imperfect, had now been rendered complete, and no supplies of any sort could reach the beleaguered and famishing city. But in all these respects the condition of the besiegers was little better, in some worse. Their energies were damped, sickness raged in their camp, their resources were well-nigh exhausted, their hopes extinguished. The siege was of necessity converted into a blockade; it became a mere question who should starve first. Yet was there no thought in the besieged of a surrender. "With open breaches," says Pottinger, "a starving soldiery and a disaffected populace, they determined to hold out to the last."[1]

49. Extreme distress of the besieged.

[1] Kaye, i. 268-271; Mr M'Neill to Lord Palmerston, June 26, 1838.

But notwithstanding all their resolution, Herat must

* This animated description is mainly taken from Eldred Pottinger's most interesting journal of the siege, excepting that relating to his noble personal conduct, which is given by Kaye; for, like all other really brave men, he is silent on his own exploits.

CHAP. XL.

1838.

50. Interference of the English, and raising of the siege.

at length have fallen, and famine would have vanquished those whom the sword could not subdue, had not external events now begun which hastened the termination of this protracted siege. The British government at Calcutta had at length become sensible of the vital interest which they had in the preservation of the gate of Hindostan, and tardily took measures to give it some slight succour. Lord Auckland, at the eleventh hour, and after the siege had lasted nine months, at the earnest request of Mr M'Neill, made a demonstration in the Persian Gulf, which, though not in itself of great magnitude, was attended with a surprising effect. The "Semiramis" and "Hugh Lindsay" steamers were despatched in the beginning of June from Bombay, with a battalion of marines and detachments of several regiments of native infantry, and on the 19th June anchored off the island of Karrack in the Persian Gulf, where they immediately landed. Intelligence of this unexpected apparition, magnified by the hundred tongues of rumour, was immediately conveyed to the Persian camp before Herat, and arrived there a few days after the repulse of the last assault. Soon after, Colonel Stoddart was despatched by Mr M'Neill to the Persian camp with a message, to the effect, that if the Persians did not retire from before Herat, and make reparation for the injuries which had been inflicted upon the English mission, it would be considered as a hostile demonstration against England. The envoy was courteously received by the Shah. "The fact is," said the latter, "if I don't leave Herat, there will be war; is not that it?" "It is war," replied Stoddart; "all depends on your majesty's answer." "We consent to the whole demands of the British Government," said the Shah, two days afterwards. "We will not go to war. Were it not for their friendship, we should not return from before Herat. Had we known that our coming here would have risked the loss of their friendship, we should not have come at all." Preparations

June 19.

Aug. 17.

for a retreat were soon after made in the Persian camp. The guns were first withdrawn from their advanced positions; the baggage-cattle were then collected, the tents struck, and on the 9th September the Shah mounted his horse and set his face homeward. The blockade was raised, and the Affghans beheld with speechless joy their wasted plains freed from the presence of the enemy.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 269, 279; Nott's Mem. i. 127.

51. Great effects of the raising of the siege in Asia.

The raising of the siege of Herat was an event of immense importance in central Asia, and if duly improved, would have restored British influence over its whole extent, and averted all the calamities which ensued. As much as it raised the reputation of British arms and diplomacy, did it lower those of Russia. More even than battles, sieges have, in modern warfare, determined the fate of empires, and fixed the wavering current of general opinion in the East. The Czar had been foiled by England; Eldred Pottinger was the acknowledged hero of Herat, Mr M'Neill the successful diplomatic agent by whom the success had been effected. British influence was restored at the court of Teheran; gratitude for assistance rendered pervaded Affghanistan. So far did these new relations proceed, that although the Russian government had, through their ambassador in Persia, Count Simonich, strongly urged the Persian government to march upon Herat, advanced them 50,000 tomauns to aid in the expedition, and engaged, in the event of success, to remit the whole remainder of the debt due by Persia to Russia under the treaty of 1828, they disavowed the whole affair when Lord Durham demanded explanations on the subject in 1839, and declared that if Count Simonich had encouraged Mahommed Shah to proceed against Herat, he had proceeded in direct violation of his instructions. At the same time they repudiated entirely Vickovich's proceedings at Cabul; a requital for valuable services by which that active agent was so disconcerted that he blew out his brains.[2]

[2] Kaye, i. 279, 286.

CHAP. XL.

1838.

52. Great effects of this defeat of Russia.

Thus did England and Russia first meet, with entire defeat to the latter, in the great battle-field of central Asia. "If we go on at this rate," said Baron Brunow, the ambassador of the Czar in London, to Sir John Hobhouse, "the Cossack and the Sepoy will soon meet on the banks of the Oxus." "Very probably, baron," replied the latter; "but however much I should regret the collision, I should have no fears of the result." In truth, the designs of Russia had now met with a signal check, and her aggressive policy had recoiled upon her own head. The system of impelling the northern powers upon the south before her own forces were brought into action; of bribing Persia to enter into the contest by the promise of Herat and the remission of the unpaid debt, Affghanistan by the offer of aid to recover Peshawur, and the Sikhs by indemnity for the loss of Peshawur by the spoils of India, had broken down at the outset. The influence of England in central Asia, well-nigh lost by the parsimonious system of late years, had been restored by the heroism of an English officer, and the devoted gallantry of his Affghan followers. Nothing was wanting but a conciliatory and liberal policy to secure the Affghanistan chiefs, now violently roused against Russia by the onslaught against Herat, in the English alliance. Unfortunately these eminently favourable circumstances were turned to no account, or rather rendered the prolific source of evil, by the policy which they induced in the British Government. Instead of entering into an alliance with Dost Mahommed, the ruler of the people's choice, and who, by his vigour and capacity, had won for himself a throne by showing he was worthy of it, and capable of meeting the wants of the country, they determined on dethroning that chief, and placing the exiled discrowned sovereign, Shah Soojah, on the throne. The fact of his having proved incapable of ruling, or maintaining himself in power, and having been for thirty years an exile, during which he had, like

his fellow-exiles in Europe, "learned nothing, forgotten nothing," was deemed of less importance than having a sovereign on the throne who owed his restoration to British interference, and was identified with our Government by present interest and past obligation.

53. Great mistake committed on this occasion by the English Government.

The result has proved that a greater and more lamentable mistake never was committed by any government. Shah Soojah was not only incapable of ruling Affghanistan, but he was in the highest degree unpopular with its inhabitants. At once weak and cruel, irresolute and revengeful, he was utterly disqualified to rule a nation of barbarians, and possessed no merit but the unwearied perseverance with which he had striven to regain the lost inheritance of his fathers. On the other hand, Dost Mahommed was in the highest degree popular with all classes, and by his vigour and capacity he had succeeded in establishing his power on a solid foundation. True, he was a usurper, the son of the vizier; he had gained a throne by dispossessing his lawful sovereign. But Shah Soojah was no better; he had for a brief period held the throne by expelling from it his elder brother, who had himself won it by dethroning and depriving of sight Zemaun Shah, the true inheritor of the crown of the Douranee empire. The race of the viziers had succeeded to that of the imbecile shahs, as that of the Maires du Palais, from which Charles Martel and Charlemagne sprung, had in the olden time to the worn-out dynasty of the *rois faineants* of the first race in France. The claim of legitimacy had as little to recommend Shah Soojah as his personal character or qualifications. He was not the rightful heir to the throne; Kamran the victorious, the ruler of Herat, and his family, came in before him. In every point of view, therefore, the determination to replace Shah Soojah upon the throne, and displace Dost Mahommed, was inexpedient and unjust. It was unjust to the rightful heir, for it tended to place a usurper permanently on the throne; it was unjust to

CHAP. XL. 1838.

the Affghans, for it was intended to deprive them of their inherent right, so frequently exercised amidst the changes of Asiatic government, of choosing their own ruler, and to force upon them a weak and hated sovereign, equally incapable of winning a throne by conquest or retaining it from inheritance. It was unjust towards Dost Mahommed, who, so far from injuring, had done everything in his power to favour British subjects and interests, and had evinced the greatest anxiety to enter into the closest alliance with the government of Calcutta. It was to the last degree inexpedient for our Indian empire, for instead of erecting a powerful barrier against the threatening dangers of Russian conquest, it was calculated to weaken that which already existed, to involve the English Government in the endless maze of Affghan politics, and instead of bringing to their support a powerful ally and a gallant people, to encumber them by the defence of a distant dependant, who could be upheld only by the force of foreign bayonets.

54. Treaty for the restoration of Shah Soojah. June 26, 1838.

These considerations, which were strongly urged upon Lord Auckland by Captain Burnes and those best acquainted with the real state of Affghanistan, were entirely disregarded, and it was resolved at all hazards to dispossess Dost Mahommed, and in his room place Shah Soojah on the throne.* This was done by the sole authority of the Governor-general and his confidential advisers, then assembled at Simlah to enjoy the cool breezes of the first slopes of the Himalaya during the sultry season; the Supreme Council at Calcutta, though they afterwards adhibited their official consent to the measures, were not, in the first instance, consulted in their preparation. Having taken his resolutions, Lord Auckland was not long in

* "In October 1838, the author (M. Martin, Esq.), deeply convinced of the unjust and perilous nature of the war, drew up a memorandum which the Marquess Wellesley transmitted to Sir John Cam Hobhouse, then President of the Board of Control. His lordship subsequently addressed a communication to Sir John against the Affghan war, predicting 'that our difficulties would commence when our military successes ended.' The Duke of Wellington, Mr Mountstuart Elphinstone, Mr Edmonstone, Mr Metcalfe, and other Indian statesmen, took the same view of the question."—M. MARTIN, 435, note.

carrying them into effect. After a brief negotiation with the discrowned exile at Loodiana, a tripartite treaty was concluded at Lahore, on the 26th June 1838, between the Governor-general, Runjeet Singh, and Shah Soojah, which, to the infinite astonishment of the latter, restored him to his ancestral throne. The principal articles of the treaty were, that the British Government and the chiefs of Lahore recognised Shah Soojah as the sovereign of Affghanistan; and he on his part engaged to cede Peshawur, Attock, and their dependencies, to the Rajah of Lahore; that the rajah undertook to despatch a body of troops to aid in re-establishing the Affghan prince on the throne; that the three contracting powers engaged mutually to defend each other in case of attack; and the Shah promised not to enter into any negotiations with any foreign state without the knowledge and consent of the British and Sikh governments, and bound himself to "oppose any power having the design to invade the British and Sikh territories by force of arms, to the utmost of his ability." Lastly, Shah Soojah promised not to disturb his nephew, the ruler of Herat, in his possessions, and renounced all claim of supremacy over the ameers of Scinde, who were to remain in possession of their country under the condition only of paying a moderate tribute to Shah Soojah, the amount of which was to be fixed by the British Government.[1]

1838.

[1] See the Treaty in Kaye, i. 320-323.

55. Reflections on this treaty.

It must be confessed that at first sight the treaty appeared to have conferred as great a benefit upon the British as the Sikh government. It secured the two powerful states of Lahore and Cabul in the English alliance, solved, in appearance at least, the differences between them, and seemed to provide an effective barrier against Muscovite aggression, alike in the mountains of Affghanistan and on the banks of the Indus. But these advantages, so specious in appearance, and not altogether destitute of foundation, in reality were entirely neutralised, and in effect turned into evils, by the inherent injustice

CHAP. XL. 1838.

with which it was tainted. It professed to regulate everything from views of expedience, and the supposed advantage of the British Government, by treaties concluded only with courts, forgetting that the people also required to be thought of; and that it was an unhallowed mode of cementing an alliance intended to serve as a barrier against Muscovite aggression, to commence with an act of spoliation equal to any of those with which the great northern potentate was charged.[1]

[1] Havelock's War in Affghanistan, i. 87; Martin, 435; Thornton, vi. 150-153.

56. Preparations for the Affghanistan expedition.

It was at first intended to assist Shah Soojah for the recovery of his throne only by a very small British auxiliary force; and with this view it was announced in a proclamation issued by the Governor-general, that the Shah "should enter Affghanistan surrounded by his own troops." With this view, 4000 irregulars were raised and placed under the nominal command of Prince Timour, eldest son of Shah Soojah, but really under the direction of British officers, and entirely paid from the British treasury. To this were to be added 6000 Sikhs under the command of Runjeet Singh's generals, who was also to station an army of 15,000 men in observation in the province of Peshawur. These forces, with the aid of the terror and influence of the English name, and the supposed anxiety of the Affghans to regain the rule of their old princes, would, it was hoped, suffice for the change of dynasty in Affghanistan, without imperilling any considerable body of British troops in its terrible defiles. Burnes, though he earnestly counselled that the case of Dost Mahommed should be reconsidered, and that we should act with him * rather than against him, yet gave it as his decided opinion, that

* "It remains to be reconsidered why we cannot act with Dost Mahommed. He is a man of undoubted ability, and has at heart a high opinion of the British nation; and if half of what you must do for others were done for him, and offers made which he could see would conduce to his interests, *he would abandon Russia and Persia to-morrow.* It may be said, that opportunity has been given him; but I would rather discuss this in person with you, for I think there is much to be said for him. Government have admitted that he had at best but a choice of difficulties; and it should not be forgotten that we promised nothing, and Persia and Russia held out a great deal."—CAPTAIN BURNES to GOVERNOR-GENERAL, June 1, 1838. KAYE, i. 340.

if his dethronement was determined on, these measures would be amply sufficient to accomplish the object in view.* But more accurate information soon convinced the Government that these expectations were fallacious, and that if Shah Soojah was really to be restored, it could only be by a British military force capable in reality, and not in name merely, of effecting the entire conquest of Affghanistan. Although, therefore, the assurances were still held out that Shah Soojah should enter Affghanistan surrounded only by his own troops, and relying for his restoration on the loyalty of his subjects, yet, in reality, preparations were made for an expedition of a very different description, and for extending British influence and authority far beyond the Punjaub and the Indus, to the distant snows of the Hindoo Coosh.[1] †

[1] Kaye, i. 340-343; Thornton, vi. 140-156; Martin, 435.

57. The forces.

The force provided for the Affghanistan expedition, when it was finally decided on, was extremely formidable, and much more than sufficient, if it had not been for the

* "As for Shah Soojah personally, the British Government have only to send him to Peshawur with an agent, and two of its own regiments as an honorary escort, and an avowal to the Affghans that we have taken up his cause, to insure his *being fixed for ever on the throne*. The Maharajah's opinion has only therefore to be asked on the ex-king's advance to Peshawur, granting him at the same time four or five of the regiments which have no Sikhs in their ranks, and Soojah becomes king."—CAPTAIN BURNES to GOVERNOR-GENERAL, July 3, 1838. KAYE, i. 342.

† "His majesty, Shah Soojah, will enter Affghanistan surrounded by his own troops, and will be supported against foreign interference and factious opposition by a British army. The Governor-general confidently hopes that the Shah will be speedily replaced on his throne by his own subjects and adherents; and when once he shall be secured in power, and the independence and integrity of Affghanistan established, the British army will be withdrawn. The Governor-general has been led to these measures by the duty which is imposed upon him of providing for the security of the possessions of the British crown; but he rejoices that in the discharge of that duty he will be enabled to assist in restoring the union and prosperity of the Affghan people. Throughout the approaching operations, British influence will be sedulously employed to further every measure of general benefit, to reconcile differences, to secure oblivion of injuries, and to put an end to the distractions by which, for so many years, the welfare and happiness of the Affghans have been impaired. Even to the chiefs whose hostile proceedings have given just cause of offence to the British Government, it will seek to secure liberal and honourable treatment on their tendering early submission, and ceasing from opposition to that course of measures which may be judged most suitable for the general advantage of their country."—Proclamation, Oct. 1, 1838. KAYE, i. 359.

CHAP. XL.

1838.

difficulties of the country, for the entire and lasting subjugation of Affghanistan. The chief force destined for the expedition was styled the "Army of the Indus," after the style of Napoleon's bulletins, and by the end of November it was all assembled in the neighbourhood of Ferozepore. It consisted at first of a very large force, chiefly drawn from Bengal, consisting of 28,000 men, which assembled in the neighbourhood of the Sikh forces, and exhibited a stupendous proof of the power and resources of the British forces in India; for the troops were assembled at the foot of the Himalaya, a thousand miles from Calcutta, and they were attended by nearly 100,000 camp-followers, and 30,000 beasts of burden. Only four European regiments, however, were in this great force, viz. the 13th and Buffs, and 16th Lancers, and the Bengal European regiment. But before the review had ceased, or active operations could be commenced, intelligence arrived of the raising of the siege of Herat, and the retreat of the Persian army: less preparation was now deemed necessary, and a part only of the assembled force received orders to move forward. It consisted of three brigades of infantry, two of cavalry, and a considerable number both of siege, horse, and field guns, amounting to 9500 men of all arms; while 6000 more, raised for the immediate service of Shah Soojah, accompanied that prince in his entry into his long lost dominions. Sir Henry Fane, an officer of tried energy and ability, in whom the Bengal army had unbounded confidence, at first had the command-in-chief. But before the march from Ferozepore began, he surrendered the post he held, partly from ill health, partly from thinking there was nothing more to do, into the hands of Sir John Keane, also a veteran of Peninsular fame, but not of the same suavity of temper, nor, equally with his predecessor, known to the troops he was destined to command.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 377-379; Thornton, vi. 158-163; Martin, 435; Nott's Memoirs, i. 107-110.

Before the army commenced its march, a series of magnificent spectacles, eminently characteristic of Eastern

manners and habits, took place on occasion of the meeting of the Governor-general at Ferozepore with the aged chief of Lahore, not inaptly styled "the Lion of the Punjaub." On one day the British force was manœuvred by Sir Henry Fane, to the infinite amazement of the Asiatics; on the next the Sikhs were exercised in presence of the English officers by their chiefs, and made a most creditable appearance. The meeting of the Governor-general with the Lahore chief, in a place selected for the purpose, about four miles from the river Gharra, presented an unrivalled scene of magnificence and splendour. A noble guard of honour lined the way, as, amidst the roar of artillery and the clang of military music, Runjeet Singh came forth in the centre of a line of elephants to the Governor-general's tent, who advanced to meet him. So great was the throng, so violent the press, when these two great potentates met, that many of the attendant Sikhs believed there was a design to destroy their chief, "and began to blow their matches and grasp their weapons with a mingled air of distrust and ferocity." Soon, however, a passage was made, and the little decrepit old man was seen tottering into the tent, supported on the one side by the Governor-general, on the other by Sir Henry Fane, whose fine figure strangely contrasted with the bent and worn-out form of the Eastern chieftain. Next day the Maharajah received Lord Auckland in his tent, who returned his visit. The magnificence of the scene then exceeded that of the preceding day, and the Sikhs fairly outdid the British in Oriental splendour. The brilliant costumes of the Sikh sirdars, the gorgeous trappings of their horses, the glittering steel casques, and corslets of chain armour, the scarlet-and-yellow dresses, the tents of crimson and gold, the long lines of elephants, and still longer squadrons of cavalry, formed an unrivalled spectacle of Eastern magnificence.[1] But different emotions arose, and every British heart beat with emotion, when, in that distant land, the well-known notes of the national anthem arose from a Sikh band, and the

58. Magnificent displays in the Punjaub. Nov. 29, 1838.

[1] Kaye, i. 373-375; Havelock's Narrative, 61; Fane's Five Years in India, 74, 75; Stocqueler's Memorials of Affghanistan, 104-107.

CHAP. XL.

guns of the Kalsa thundered forth salute to the representative of Queen Victoria.

1838.

It was not, however, only in these scenes of splendour that the Affghanistan army was to be engaged. Could the future have been foreseen, the arid march, the muffled drum, the wasted host, would have arisen in mournful solemnity before the dazzled vision. Little anticipating the catastrophe which awaited them, the British officers returned gaily to their tents, charmed with the present, careless of the future. Like the French officers setting out on the Moscow campaign, they were in the highest spirits, anticipating only a military promenade of six months, to be followed by a speedy return to their quarters at Calcutta or Bombay, and regretting only that the raising of the siege of Herat had deprived them of the laurels won in Russian warfare, with which they hoped to adorn their brows. The march of the principal army under Sir John Keane began on the 2d December, and it was determined that its route should be through Scinde, in a north-westerly direction, to cross the Indus at Bukhur. From thence it was to move by Shikarpoor and Dadur to the mouth of the Bolan Pass, and after surmounting that arduous ascent, it was to move by Quettah to Candahar, and thence by Ghuznee to Cabul. This was a strangely devious course, for the army was to move over two sides of a triangle instead of the third; but the object of taking this circuitous route was to coerce and overawe the Ameers of Scinde, whose hostility was apprehended on good grounds, and who occupied an important military position, commanding the communications of the army. The army headed by Prince Timour was to proceed by the direct route through the Khyber Pass, the tribes guarding which were to be propitiated by British gold.[1]

59. Commencement of the march. Dec. 2.

[1] Kaye, i. 378-381; Thornton, vi. 156-161.

The army of Shah Soojah headed the line of march, in order to keep up the appearance of the movement being a national one, and not supported by foreign bayonets. But a difficulty occurred at the very outset of their

career. By the existing treaty with the Ameers of Scinde, it was stipulated that the navigation of the Indus should be opened, but only to merchant vessels, the passage of vessels of war or military stores being expressly prohibited. That great stream, however, had now become the principal line of communication for the British army, which at all hazards required to be kept open, and rendered available for military stores of every description. The treaty was therefore openly set at nought, and it was intimated to the Ameers that military stores of every kind must pass through their territory. Shah Soojah also made large demands of money from these unhappy chiefs, under the name of arrears of tribute, which amounted at first to £250,000, and were only at last compromised for £100,000. Remonstrance or complaint on the part of the native powers was alike stopped by the sabre and the bayonet.[1] The Ameers were openly told that "they might as well hope to dam up the Indus at Bukhur, as to stop the approach of the British army;" and that the day when they "connected themselves with any other power than the British, would be the last of their independence, if not their rule." Hyderabad, their capital city, which had threatened resistance to this fearful inroad of armed men, was forced to purchase abstinence from pillage by payment of £100,000. Thus, in breach of treaties and open violence, commenced this ill-starred expedition, destined to bring a terrible retribution on the rulers who had originated, and the nation which had permitted it.[2]

60. Early difficulties of the march through Scinde.

[1] Kaye, i. 38.

[2] Kaye, i. 380-385; Thornton, vi. 162-165; Martin, 435.

The Shah's army, forming the advanced guard, reached the banks of the Indus on the 16th January, having sustained little loss except in camels, great numbers of which perished from fatigue and change of forage. Desertion had, however, already become frequent in the Shah's ranks, the hardships of that wearisome march inspiring the most dismal apprehensions in the feeble inhabitants of Hindostan. Their forebodings proved too well founded.

61. Passage of the Indus, and march through the Bolan Pass.

CHAP. XL. 1839.

The army consisted of 9500 fighting men, 38,000 camp-followers, and 30,000 camels; and it was with the utmost difficulty, and only by the most strenuous efforts on the part of the commissariat officers, that provisions could be got for the enormous multitude in their march over the plains which lay between Ferozepore and the Indus. But the army was, generally speaking, still in high spirits. The weather was clear, bright, and invigorating. Supplies were, by herculean efforts, obtained in abundance; and at length the long-wished-for waters of the Indus appeared, and the fortress of Bukhur, which commanded the passage, having been seized, partly by persuasion, partly by violence, the army was crossed over on a bridge of boats. But when they quitted the banks of the Indus the difficulties of the march appeared in appalling magnitude. In the vast expanse of sandy desert, not a spot of green pasture met the eye, not a sound of rushing water saluted the ear. The hard, salt-mixed sand crackled under their horses' feet as the cavaliers galloped over the wilderness in search of the promised land. But it was long of appearing. The march from Shikarpoor to Dadur, at the mouth of the Bolan Pass, is a hundred and forty-six miles, which was traversed in sixteen painful marches. Water and forage there were none to be had in that howling wilderness. The camels, parched with thirst, fell down dead by scores on the road-side; and the fainting troops threw themselves on the yet quivering remains in quest of the little store of water they carried in their intestines. At length, to their unspeakable joy, they reached Dadur; but as there were no provisions there, and only a month's supply remained on their beasts of burden, it was deemed indispensable to push on, and in the middle of March the Bengal army entered the formidable Bólan Pass.[1]

[1] Havelock, 140, 160; Kaye, i. 404-407; Thornton, vi. 166-169.

Fortunately negotiation and gold, preceding the army, had there disarmed the hostility of the Beloochee tribes who held the pass, and no difficulties were to be appre-

hended but such as arose from the obstacles and impediments of nature. But they were so great as to occasion a very great loss to the army; and such as, if combined with any serious resistance from man, would have rendered the passage impracticable. The pass is nearly sixty miles in length, of continued and often very rapid ascent, shut in with stupendous precipices or wooded cliffs on either side. The joyful sound of rushing waters was here to be heard; but it little availed the thirsty troops, for the torrent which roared by their side was polluted by the multitude of dead camels which had fallen or been thrown into it by the advanced columns. The road was composed of sharp flint stones, which lamed the cattle, and such as fell behind were immediately seized by the marauding tribes which infested the flanks and rear of the army. The road was strewed with baggage, abandoned tents, and stores; and luxuries which a few weeks before or after would have fetched their weight in gold, were cast aside, or left to be trampled down by the cattle in the rear. At length the worn-out troops emerged from the pass, and beheld with unspeakable joy an open mountain-valley spread out before them. "The clear crisp climate," says an eyewitness, "braced the European frame; and over the wide plain, bounded by noble mountain-ranges, intersected by many sparkling streams, and dotted with orchards and vineyards, the eye ranged with delight; while the well-known carol of the lark, mounting up in the fresh morning air, broke with many home associations charmingly on the English ear."[1]

62. Passage of the Bolan Pass.

[1] Havelock, 187, 194; Kaye, i. 407-409; Thornton, vi. 169, 170.

On the 26th March the Bengal column reached Quettah, a miserable town, presenting no supplies whatever to the troops; and then the difficulties of his position began painfully to present themselves to the commanding officer. Here Sir Willoughby Cotton had orders to wait for further instructions; but this had become impossible, for the supplies of the army were

63. Increased sufferings of the troops.

CHAP. XL. 1839.

becoming very low, and although they were doled out in the scantiest measure to the unfortunate soldiers and camp-followers, yet they could not, even by the most rigid economy, be made to last much longer. The loaf of the European soldier was diminished in weight; the native troops received only a pound, the camp-followers half a pound, of flour a-day. Starvation stared them all in the face. In this extremity Captain Burnes repaired to Khelat, and by the promise of ample subsidies obtained from the khan of that place some trifling supplies of grain and camels, but adequate only to the wants of a few days. Supplies could not be found in the country. The inhabitants were subsisting on herbs and grasses gathered in the jungle. It was only by bringing down sheep from the higher mountains that any addition to the food of the army could be obtained. To push on as rapidly as possible, and reach a more fruitful region, was the only course which could be followed; but though Cotton acted with promptitude and decision, he was forced to wait till Sir J. Keane came up and assumed the command. Then the army advanced rapidly, and at length, on the 25th April, Shah Soojah, accompanied by the British officers, reached Candahar, the second city in his dominions, and the wearied troops found rest and food in a fruitful country. The losses in the march, though wholly unopposed, had been enormous: 20,000 beasts of burden had perished, whose remains had for long furnished the chief food to the troops, whose ordinary rations had been reduced to a fourth part of their usual amount. The sufferings of the men, and still more of the animals, during the latter part of the march, were indescribable; and never before had been seen how dependent is man on the vital element of water. Horses, already half starved for want of grain and grass, were throughout the day panting in all the agonies of thirst; and in the evening a few drops of water could not be obtained even to mix the medicines of the sick in the hospitals. Anxious looks were cast to every green

mound in the arid waste, and its base searched by panting crowds in search of the limpid stream. If a stream was seen glittering through the trees on the side of the road, men, horses, and camels rushed with unbridled impetuosity to the side, and plunged their heads in the refreshing wave, drinking till they nearly burst. Often, when water was to be had only in small quantities, officers even of the highest rank voluntarily shared the much-coveted fluid with the humblest privates, proving that the European had not degenerated from the time when, in the same desert, Alexander the Great, pouring away the helmet filled with water offered to him, quenched the thirst of a whole army.[1]

[1] Havelock, i. 323, 324; Thornton, vi. 173-175; Kaye, i. 418-421.

64. Reception of Shah Soojah in Candahar. April 25.

The reception given to Shah Soojah in Candahar was very flattering, and such as to justify in a great degree the assurances held out by Captain Burnes and Mr Macnaghten as to the disposition of the people to hail with joy the restoration of a prince of the ancient lineage. An immense crowd assembled to greet his approach; there were shouts, and the sound of music, and the noise of firing, and the countenances of the people evinced at least momentary pleasure. In the evening Mr Macnaghten wrote to Lord Auckland—"The Shah made a grand public entry into the city this morning, and was received with feelings amounting nearly to adoration." But the pleasing anticipations formed from this reception were much dispelled by what appeared at a grand review of the army, held a few days after, when the restored monarch first ascended the "musnud," or throne of state. The pageant was magnificent, and the troops, now recovered from their fatigues, made a brilliant appearance. But there was no enthusiasm in the crowd; "no one said God bless him." The English officers surrounded the king in their splendid uniforms of scarlet and gold; but few Affghans approached him.[2] Murmurs were openly heard against the Feringhees (infidels), who were come to exterminate the true believers; and it was

[2] Kaye, i. 426-428; Thornton, vi. 176-178.

CHAP. XL.

1839.

already evident that the Affghan throne, in the person of Shah Soojah, could be maintained only by British bayonets.

65. Passage of the Kyber by Colonel Wade's force. July 25.

Soon after these operations were concluded by the army of Sir John Keane in western Affghanistan, the eastern force, nominally under Prince Timour, but really under Colonel Wade, was engaged in the arduous task of surmounting the Khyber Pass. This was a service of very great difficulty, for not only was the defile of great length and terrific strength, but to force it Wade had only a motley crowd of 6000 Hindoos, Sikhs, and Affghans, upon the fidelity of whom it was impossible to rely. The operation, however, was conducted with more facility than, in the circumstances, could have been expected. The Afredis who held the pass had had ample time to mature their defences during the long time that the British auxiliary forces lay at Peshawur; but such was the vigour of Wade's operations when he did advance, and such his diplomatic skill, that, partly by force, partly by address, all resistance was overcome. Prince Timour proved a weak, incapable man, who could never, unaided, have led his troops through the Khyber; but his deficiencies were amply supplied by the energy and ability of the British officers in command of the expedition. The pass was surmounted with but a desultory resistance, in overcoming which, however, the troops, regular and irregular, evinced the greatest spirit, and the Sikhs in particular gave token of those martial qualities which were destined ere long to try to the uttermost the prowess of the British soldier in the field. On the 25th July the fortress of Ali-Musjid, which commands the entrance of the defile, was invested, and on the following day it yielded to the well-directed fire of the guns under Lieut. Barr, of the Bengal artillery.[1] This success, and the imposing aspect of the army which swept through the pass, broke up the confederacy of the tribes who were inclined to dispute the passage: some drew off their

July 26.

[1] Kaye, i. 468-470; Barr's Narrative, 89, 94.

forces in despair; some opened their doors to the magic of a golden key. All opposition was finally overcome, and on the 3d September, Wade and Prince Timour reached Cabul, which had previously been occupied by Sir John Keane's forces.

66. Great sensation in India from these events.

The commencement of this formidable war, and the plunging so large a part of the British forces into the distant defiles of Affghanistan, produced an immense sensation in India, and evinced the treacherous surface on which the British Government was reposing in fancied security. The native states on the borders were beginning to evince signs of feverish anxiety. From the hills of Nepaul to the jungles of Burmah came threats, at first smothered, but ere long openly uttered, of invasion. Even in our own provinces, and those longest subjected to our rule, there was an uneasy restless feeling among all classes—the well-known and often unaccountable precursor of external catastrophe or internal revolution. This feeling was peculiarly strong among the Mussulman inhabitants, forming above fifteen millions in the upper provinces. It was akin to that which, eight-and-thirty years before, had alarmed Marquess Wellesley, when Zemaun Shah threatened a descent from the mountains with the whole forces of central Asia, to exterminate the haughty infidels who had so long oppressed the land. In their eyes the approaching conflict assumed the air of a religious crusade. It was believed that the Feringhees were preparing to scale the mountains—"the native guardians of the land"—in order to exterminate the race of true believers in their strongholds, but that the followers of the Prophet would rise up in countless multitudes, repel the vain assault, pour down over the plains of the Punjaub and the Ganges, and wrest all the country, from the Indus to the sea, from the infidel usurpers.[1] So general were these feelings, so common the panic excited, that they formed the topic of conversation in the bazaars of

[1] Kaye, 290.

CHAP. XL.

Calcutta and Bombay, and occasioned a serious decline in the value of the public securities.

1839.

67. Movement of the army towards Cabul. July 15.

But whatever might be the expectations and hopes of the Hindoo and Mahommedan powers in India, the march of events, in the first instance at least, was very different, and a signal triumph awaited the arms of Christendom in the very cradle of the rule of the Crescent in central Asia. The stay of the army of Sir John Keane in Candahar was very brief, and not more than was indispensable to enable them to recover from the toils and hardships of their long and exhausting march. It was expedient to press forward, and take advantage of the disunion and consternation which the rapid advance and unexpected successes of the British army had occasioned among the Affghanistan tribes. The bloodless fall of Candahar had struck terror into the souls of the partisans of Dost Mahommed, though it had been expected by that sagacious chief himself, who was well aware it was the stronghold of the Douranee dynasty. But he had never anticipated the successful passage of the Bolan and Kojuk passes; still less that the terrors of the far-famed Khyber should have been surmounted by a mere motley array of Asiatics, led only by European officers. Disunion evidently prevailed in the country; the hopes of Feringhee gold had done more than the dread of the Feringhee bayonets. A powerful force was advancing against his capital, both by the eastern and western passes; he was obliged to divide his troops in order to oppose them, and he knew not on whom, in this strait, he could rely to repel the threatened invasion. His empire was crumbling to pieces before his eyes. This state of things made it advisable to press upon the enemy before he had recovered from his consternation, and accordingly Sir John Keane, in the beginning of July, set out on his march for Cabul by the route of GHUZNEE.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 438-440; Thornton, vi. 179-181.

This far-famed fortress lies on the direct road from Candahar to Cabul, distant two hundred and thirty miles

68. Description of Ghuznee, and plans of Dost Mahommed.

from the former, and ninety from the latter. The whole country on either side through which the road passes is open and level, fruitful and abounding with supplies, and presenting no obstacles to an advancing army. The town itself is inferior, both in importance and population, to either of these capital cities; but the strength of its citadel, which was universally deemed impregnable in Asia, as well as its position, commanding the principal road to Cabul, rendered it, in a military point of view, a post of the highest importance. The rampart, which is sixty feet high, of good masonry, is built on a scarped mount, thirty-five feet high, rising from a wet ditch, and defended by numerous towers, a fausse-braye, and various skilfully constructed outworks. The interior of the town by no means corresponds to this imposing exterior. Situated on the extreme point of a low range of hills, it is composed of mean houses and narrow streets; but the citadel contains spacious squares, overshadowed by lofty trees, handsome palaces, and stabling for an entire brigade of cavalry. The governor of the place, Hyder Khan, had a large garrison of trusty troops under his command. To guard against the gates being blown open, as had so often been done by the British in Indian warfare, they were all walled up, except the one to the northward leading to Cabul. The ramparts were lofty and massy, incapable of being breached but by heavy artillery and regular approaches. Dost Mahommed never supposed that the English general would attempt the reduction of a place of such strength, least of all by a *coup-de-main*. He thought they would mask it, and push forward towards Cabul, where he was prepared to meet them. With this view he had largely strengthened the garrison, and stationed a body of irregular horse on the hills in the neighbourhood, who were to sally forth and threaten the communications and rear of the invaders,[1] while he himself arrested them in front, in a strong position which he had occupied twenty miles in

[1] Kaye, 443; Thornton, vi. 181, 182.

CHAP. XL.

1839.

front of Cabul, and commanding all the approaches to that city.

69. Melancholy tragedy before Ghuznee, and plan of the attack. July 22.

But Dost Mahommed's well-conceived plan was entirely defeated, for the British commander had no intention of merely masking Ghuznee. Abdool Rached Khan, a nephew of Dost Mahommed, had joined the British army on its approach to the fortress. He was a man of intelligence, and well acquainted with the fortifications; and he revealed to Major Thomson, the chief engineer, the important secret of the weak point where an assault might be hazarded with a prospect of success. Before the attack was made, however, a deplorable event occurred, which demonstrated both the desperate character of the fanatics with whom we had to deal, and the revengeful disposition of the sovereign whom we were striving to put on the throne. A band of frantic Mahommedans, named Ghazees, incited by the priests, had poured down upon the British camp, and were met and defeated by Nicolson's native horse and Outram's foot, and their holy standard, with fifty prisoners, was taken. They were brought into the presence of Shah Soojah, and then, after reviling the king in his own presence, one of them actually stabbed one of the royal attendants under his very eyes. Upon this Shah Soojah ordered *them all* to be put to death, and they were hacked to pieces at his feet. This atrocious massacre was never forgotten in Affghanistan; it increased the indisposition of the people to receive the sovereign sought to be forced upon them, and led to an awful retribution, when the Affghans got the upper hand, and the wild cry of the Ghazees was heard in the Coord Cabul Pass.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 444, 445; Havelock, ii. 69; Outram's Rough Notes, 112; Dr Kennedy's Narrative, ii. 39-41.

70. The assault. July 22.

Relying upon the important information obtained from Abdool Khan, Sir John Keane and Major Thomson resolved upon an attempt to carry the place by a *coup-de-main*. For this purpose a storming party was formed, consisting of the light companies of the four European regiments, the 2d, 13th, and 17th, with the Company's

European regiment, who formed the advance, followed by the other companies of the same regiments in support. The advance was under the command of Colonel Dennie of the 13th regiment, the support under Brigadier-general Sale. The night was dark and gusty; the wind wailed aloud, but its blasts were drowned in the roar of the artillery, which kept up a heavy fire at random upon the ramparts, on the side opposite to that where the assault was intended to be made. Meanwhile the stormers were silently formed on the Cabul road, and at three in the morning all was ready for the assault. Beguiled by the false attack, the Affghans manned all the ramparts against which the fire was directed, and a row of blue lights, suddenly lit up along the walls, showed that they expected and were prepared for an escalade. But the stormers were not idle during this violent cannonade. In profound silence, and unobserved, under cover of the darkness, they silently piled the powder-bags against the Cabul gate; the fusee was fired by Lieutenant Durand, and the explosion took place. Above the blasts of the tempest and the roar of the artillery, the mighty sound was heard by all, whether in the city or the camp, and every eye was turned towards the quarter from which it arose. A column of black smoke was seen to arise; down with a heavy crash came the huge masses of masonry and rent beams which had been lifted up; and amidst the silence which followed the awful sound, a bugle was heard sounding the advance. On rushed Dennie, at the head of the stormers, into the scene of ruin; the opening was gained before the defenders could man it, and soon the bayonets of the British were crossing with the swords of the Affghans. A few moments of mortal strife took place in the dark, but the British gained ground,[1] they caught a glimpse of the first streaks of dawn on the eastern sky within the walls, and soon three loud cheers—so loud that they were heard through the

[1] Kaye, i. 446, 447; Havelock, ii. 79, 80; Thornton, vi. 192-195.

CHAP. XL. 1839.

whole camp—announced that the stormers had entered Ghuznee.

71. Capture of the fortress.

But the fortress, though entered, was not yet taken. Sale was eagerly advancing with the main column in support, when he met an engineer officer who had been blown down by the explosion, who reported that the entrance was blocked up by the ruins, and that Dennie could not force his way in. Uncertain what to do, Sale halted his column, and a short interval of doubt and anxiety took place. But soon the bugle was again heard sounding the advance, where a desperate strife awaited the assailants. The Affghans, now thoroughly alarmed, and aware of the scene of danger, came crowding in from all quarters, and a scene of matchless horror and confusion ensued. Dennie, with his small but dauntless band, was holding his ground with invincible tenacity, and pouring in volley after volley on the infuriated crowd. Into the midst of the throng Sale rushed at the head of his men; he was cut down by the sabre of an Affghan, but after a desperate struggle he regained his feet, and clove his opponent's head, by one blow, to the teeth. The support under Captain Croker rapidly came up, followed by the reserve under Colonel Orchard; the pass was won, and ere long the colours of the 13th and 17th were seen waving above the smoke in the strong morning breeze.* A loud cheer burst from the camp of the besiegers at the joyful sight, which was re-echoed by fearful cries from the fortress, for the Affghans rushed, sword in hand, from their covers, and plied their sabres with frantic resolution against the bayonets of the assailants. A terrible strife, a fearful carnage, took place before the fortress was completely won: but in the hour of triumph mercy was not forgotten; the unresisting were spared, the women were respected, and not an inmate of Hyder Khan's zenana suffered outrage.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 447-449; Thornton, vi. 191-194; Havelock, ii. 99-104.

The fall of Ghuznee, which was immediately followed

* The colours of the 13th were first planted on the ramparts by Ensign Frew, nephew of the Hon. John Hookham Frew.

Frew. Frere

by the capture of the governor, Hyder Khan, and such of the garrison as had not been slain in the assault, 1600 in number, was a mortal stroke to Dost Mahommed. The booty taken was immense; vast stores of ammunition, guns, and provisions fell into the hands of the victors, who had only to lament the loss of seventeen killed and a hundred and sixty-five wounded; of these, eighteen were officers—an unusually large proportion, affording decisive proof how gallantly they had conducted themselves in the desperate struggle. Five hundred bodies of the Affghans were buried in the town, besides a great number who fell under the sabres of the cavalry in the pursuit. But the moral effects of the victory were even greater than its material results. Having been universally considered as impregnable, and the principal bulwark of Affghanistan, its rapid and apparently easy capture diffused universal consternation. It struck terror into the intrepid soul of Dost Mahommed, who thenceforward became impressed with the idea that the British were invincible, and that it was in vain to contend with the evident decree of destiny in their favour. Afzul Khan, one of his sons, who was hovering in the neighbourhood, prepared to fall on the beaten army, was struck with such terror, when he saw the British colours waving on the ramparts of the far-famed citadel, that, abandoning his baggage, elephants, and camp-equipage, which fell into the hands of the victors, he fled back to Cabul. Nothing remained capable of arresting the British in their advance to the capital.[1]

72. Results of the victory.

[1] Thornton, vi. 195-197; Kaye, i. 449-451; Havelock, ii. 104-107.

Thither accordingly they advanced, after a halt of a few days at Ghuznee. Dost Mahommed, with a resolution worthy of the highest admiration, desired all who wavered in their allegiance to leave his camp, and himself moved forward, with such as he thought he could rely on, to Urghundeh, where he parked his artillery and prepared to give battle. But it was evidently in vain; the seeds of dissolution were sown in his army. The venal Kuzilbashes, the treacherous Affghans, were fast desert-

73. Vain efforts of Dost Mahommed to make a stand, and his flight.

CHAP. XL. 1839.

ing his camp. All sought to pay their court to the victors: it was the counterpart of Napoleon at Fontainebleau. He besought them to make a stand, and rally like true believers around the standard of the Prophet, but it was in vain. "You have eaten my salt," he said, "for thirteen years. It is too plain you are resolved to seek a new master; grant me but one favour in requital for that long period of maintenance and kindness; enable me to die with honour; stand by the brother of Futteh Khan while he executes one last charge against the cavalry of these Feringhee dogs; in that onset he will fall; then go and make your own terms with Shah Soojah." But the heart-stirring appeal was made in vain: none responded to it; terror or treachery had frozen every heart. With tears in his eyes, the gallant chief turned his horse's head, and, abandoning his recreant followers, fled to Cabul, whence he made for the wilds of the Hindoo Coosh, to seek in its icy solitudes, and amidst the savage Oosbegs, beyond the Bamian Pass, that fidelity which he could no longer hope to find among his own countrymen.[1]

[1] Havelock, ii. 124-130; Kaye, i. 452-454; Thornton, vi. 190-197.

74. Entry of the British into Cabul. Aug. 7.

A detachment of cavalry, under Captain Outram, who volunteered for the service, dashed off in pursuit of Dost Mahommed, and for several days had him almost in sight. He would certainly have been taken, had not an Affghan chief, Hadjee Khan, who had betrayed Dost Mahommed and undertaken to be their guide, proved a second time a traitor, and purposely delayed the march to give his former master time to escape. The British army broke up from Ghuznee on the 29th July, and after an unresisted march of eight days, arrived before Cabul, which they entered in triumph on the 7th August. Gorgeous in gay apparel, glittering with jewels, and surrounded by a brilliant staff, in which the scarlet and gold of the English uniforms shone forth conspicuous, Shah Soojah traversed the city of his fathers, and proudly ascended the Bala-Hissar, the venerated palace of his race. But though a vast crowd was assembled to witness his entry, there was

no popular enthusiasm, no indication of a gratified national wish. Slowly, and in majestic pomp, and with the air rather of conquerors than allies, the procession wound up the ascent. But when they reached the summit, and entered the gates of the palace, the dethroned monarch's joy could no longer be concealed. With almost infantine delight, he went through all the long-left but unforgotten rooms and gardens, and received with undisguised transports the congratulations of the British officers upon his restoration to his dominions.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 459-461; Havelock, ii. 118; Kennedy, ii, 83; Major Houghton, 251; Thornton, 197, 198.

75. Honours bestowed on those engaged in the expedition.

The unexpected and rapid success of the British army in Affghanistan, and the restoration of Shah Soojah to what was fondly hoped to be an undisputed throne, gave the greatest satisfaction to the British Government and people. Honours and rewards were showered with a liberal but not undeserved hand on the officers engaged in the expedition. Lord Auckland was advanced to the dignity of earl; Sir John Keane was made a peer, with a pension of £2000 a-year; Mr Macnaghten and Col. Henry Pottinger were made baronets; Col. Wade, a knight; while Sir Willoughby Cotton, Col. Sale, and several others, were created Knights Commanders of the Bath. The splendour of the success, and the comparatively small loss with which it had been achieved, stifled for a season the voice of discontent; and though the Duke of Wellington, Marquess Wellesley, and a few other sagacious observers, still maintained that our difficulties were only about to commence, and that we had better take warning from the fate of the Moscow expedition, yet the great majority gave way to no such apprehensions, and fondly hoped that, after reposing a while on its laurels, the force engaged, leaving Shah Soojah, a faithful and devoted ally, firmly seated on the throne, with the keys of India in his hand, would return in safety to the plains of Hindostan.[2]

[2] Thornton, vi. 207.

Meanwhile Colonel Wade, with the force which had passed the Khyber, after making itself master, on the

CHAP. XL.

1839.

76. Flattering appearance of the country.

way, of Jellalabad, had arrived at Cabul on the 3d of September, so that an imposing force of 15,000 men, British and auxiliaries, was assembled in the Affghanistan capital.''' This large force enabled Sir John Keane to extend his detachments in different directions up the valleys of Affghanistan, one of which, advancing to the foot of the Hindoo Coosh, chased Dost Mahommed over its snowy summit, to seek an asylum amidst the huts of the distant Oosbegs. To appearance, the country was not only entirely subdued, but in a great measure tranquillised; and though a few small expeditionary parties were cut off, yet this was no more than might have been expected in a mountainous country, amidst a warlike people, upon whom a new government had been violently imposed by foreign bayonets. Supplies came in on all sides in great abundance. The never-failing magnet of gold drew forth all the resources of the country, and the refractory chiefs were every day sending in their adhesion.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 463, 464; Thornton, vi. 208.

77. Real causes of embarrassment to the Indian Government.

In the midst of these flattering appearances there was no solid ground for confidence; and not the least part of the embarrassment of the Indian Government arose from the very magnitude and decisive nature of its success. Shah Soojah, it was true, was seated on the throne, and from his palace on the Bala-Hissar might view without immediate alarm the figure of Dost Mahommed flitting behind the clouds and snows of the Bamian Pass, amidst the uncouth and shivering Oosbegs. But it had already become evident that he had no confidence in his own position, that he was unpopular with the great majority of his countrymen, and that the withdrawal of the British troops would be the immediate signal for his fall. If so, the restored government of Dost Mahommed would immediately, alike from policy and the desire of revenge, ally itself in the closest manner with Russia, and the whole objects of the expedition would not only be lost, but the very danger enhanced which it was its chief object to avert. Yet how was the army to be kept in its present

position in Affghanistan without a strain upon the Indian empire, which its resources, great as they were, might prove incapable of standing? The country now occupied by the British troops was of great extent, a thousand miles from its base of operations in Hindostan, and inhabited by warlike and hostile tribes inured to warfare, and with arms in their hands, which they well knew how to wield. To retain a great force in such a situation would prove an irremediable drain upon the resources of India, and to leave a small one only was to expose it to imminent hazard of being cut off.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 464-466.

78. Plans of Lord Auckland for the future in Affghanistan. Oct. 2.

Lord Auckland, after carefully reviewing every side of this difficult question, was of opinion that, although the British army beyond the Indus could not with safety be entirely withdrawn, yet it would be sufficient to leave an auxiliary force of five or six regiments to aid in keeping Shah Soojah on the throne. To carry into execution this design, it was proposed to withdraw the Bombay army entire by the Bolan Pass, and a portion of that of Bengal by the Khyber, leaving British troops at Cabul and Candahar to support the government, and in Ghuznee and Quettah on the west, and Jellalabad and Ali-Musjid on the east. These designs were only partially carried into effect; it was found to be necessary to leave a much larger force in the country than was at first intended. The general orders announcing the ultimate decision of Government were looked for with much anxiety, and they at length made their appearance on the 2d October. A comparatively small force, consisting of the 16th lancers, with two regiments of native horse and a large part of the horse-artillery, was to return to India under Sir John Keane; but the whole of the 1st division of Bengal infantry, with the 13th Queen's regiment of infantry, were to remain in Cabul and Candahar; Ghuznee and Jellalabad were to be strongly occupied by native regiments. Sir Willoughby Cotton was intrusted with the command-in-chief. The forces in Ghuznee were under

CHAP. XL.

1839.

the immediate command of Major M'Laren, those in Candahar of General Nott, and in Jellalabad of General Sale. In addition to this, a detachment of infantry, with a troop of horse-artillery under Lieutenant Murray Mackenzie, with a Ghoorka regiment, was sent forward to the very extremity of the Shah's dominions to the northward, to keep an eye upon Dost Mahommed, who had found refuge among the Oosbegs on the other side of the lofty mountain-range of the Hindoo Coosh. This little army, by incredible exertions, made its way through these dreary wildernesses, reached the Pass of Bamian in safety, and prepared to pass the winter in caverns, amidst the ice and snow of the great Caucasian range.[1]

[1] General Orders, Oct. 2, 1839, Calcutta Gazette; Kaye, i. 465, 473; Thornton, vi. 200, 201. Nott's Memoirs, i. 142-145.

79. Attack on Khelat.

The homeward march of the Bombay army was signalised by the capture of the strong fortress of Khelat, the Khan of which was judged to have merited deposition by the hostility and treachery he had shown. The citadel, which stands on a high rock, overlooks the town; and on the north were three heights of nearly equal elevation, which the Khan had lined with infantry, supported by five guns in position. The attacking force consisted of the 2d and 17th regiments, a native regiment, six guns, and a detachment of local force, under General Willshire. The assault was directed, in the first instance, against the infantry on the hills, and the shrapnell shells from Stephenson's guns soon compelled them to seek refuge in the walls of the fortress. The guns were immediately pushed forward to within two hundred yards of the gate, notwithstanding a heavy fire from the matchlockmen of the enemy; and after playing for some time, it at last gave way. Pointing to the cleared entrance, Willshire gave the word to advance, and the British soldiers, springing up with a loud cheer from the rocks and bushes by which they had been covered, rushed forward, headed by Pennycuick and his men, to the assault. The other companies quickly followed, and the entrance was won; but a desperate struggle ensued before the citadel was taken, for every inch

of the ground was manfully contested. At its entrance Mehrab Khan and his chiefs stood, sword in hand, prepared to give battle for his last stronghold. But nothing could in the end stand the fierce attack of the British. Volley after volley was poured in by the leading companies with deadly precision of aim; the Khan and eight of his principal officers fell dead or wounded; and at length, being convinced by Lieutenant Loveday, who went up alone to a parley, that further resistance was vain, they surrendered at discretion. The loss of the British was thirty-two officers and men killed, and one hundred and seven wounded.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 489-491; Thornton, vi. 201-205.

80. Pleasant quarters of the troops in Cabul in autumn and winter.

The autumn and winter which succeeded this brilliant campaign passed pleasantly to the officers and men of the army of the Indus. The fine climate, which felt deliciously cool after the sultry gales of Hindostan, the keen bracing air, the fine forests and finer scenery, the ice-cold water of the environs of Cabul, rendered the place at first an earthly paradise to men who had been toiling for months under a burning sun, in a long and fatiguing march from the plains of India. There were shows, spectacles, and amusements: the officers rode races, to the no small astonishment of the Affghans; reviews on a grand scale, and with princely magnificence, were held; and the king, who delighted in scenes of pageantry, established an order of knighthood, and distributed the insignia, to the persons selected to receive them, with grace and dignity. Amidst these scenes of festivity and amusement the time passed pleasantly away, as it ever does when it "only treads on flowers;" and the officers who were left, deeming the campaign at an end, and that they were only destined to reap its fruits, sent for their wives, and scarcely envied those who, on the 18th September, commenced their march back to India by the route of the Kojuk and Bolan passes.[2]

[2] Kaye, i. 471, 472; Havelock, ii. 136, 147; Thornton, vi. 201.

But the thorns were not long of showing themselves;

CHAP. XL.

1839.

81. Growing difficulties of the British position.

and the British officers were soon taught, to their cost, that their military occupation of Affghanistan was not to be entirely of a pacific character. The detachments sent out in different directions did not meet with any open opposition in the field, but they soon found that they were surrounded by secret enemies, and that the great majority of the clans wanted only a leader, and some prospect of success, to break out into insurrection. Even in the capital, notwithstanding the presence of government and five thousand British troops, and the occupation of the Bala-Hissar, impregnable to the whole forces of Cabul, unmistakable symptoms of discontent appeared. The prices of everything had risen seriously, in some articles doubled; the necessary result of a commissariat which, at extravagant prices, bought up all provisions within their reach; and all this, which told severely upon the poorer classes, was set down, not without justice, to the hated presence of the Feringhees. Severe oppression was exercised by Prince Timour's troops on the natives, which at length reached such a pitch that General Nott flogged one of the marauders in his train in his own presence. The evils of a tripartite government, almost equally divided between Shah Soojah, the nominal sovereign; Sir William Macnaghten, the political agent; and Sir Willoughby Cotton, the military commander-in-chief, were already beginning to be felt. Power so divided became impotent. Responsibility was no longer felt when it could so easily be devolved on another. To these many sources of danger were ere long added others, less formidable in appearance, but scarcely less so in their ultimate results. The idle hours of the officers were soon beguiled by more exciting pursuits than the race-course; the zenana presented greater attractions than the hunting-field;[1] and the general partiality of beauty for military success inflicted wounds on the Affghan chiefs more painful than those of the sword, and excited a thirst for ven-

[1] Kaye, i. 480, 614; Nott, i. 194-206.

CHAP. XL.

1839.

82. Russian expedition against Khiva. Oct. 1839.

geance more intolerable than the subjugation of their country, or the forcible change of their government.

While difficulties were thus besetting the English army in Affghanistan, the early and unlooked-for success of the expedition had fixed the attention and excited the jealousy of the cabinet of St Petersburg. Something required to be done to re-establish Russian influence in central Asia, and counterbalance the check it had received from the failure before Herat, and the triumphant march of the British to Affghanistan. For this purpose advantage was taken of numerous acts of violence committed by the Khiva chiefs upon the Russian merchants carrying on trade with central Asia, and who had been, in a great many instances, slain or carried into captivity by those ruthless marauders, to demand reparation and the punishment of the offenders; and upon this being refused or delayed, an expedition was prepared to invade and occupy the country.* The Russians had ample cause for aggression—much more so than the English had for their expedition into Affghanistan—and, like it, they shared the fate of all the incursions which the powers of Europe have made into central Asia. After gaining, as is usually the case, considerable advantages in the outset, it was entirely defeated, and with frightful loss, in the end.[1] The climate, the snows, pestilence, famine, and the inconceivable difficulties of the land carriage, proved fatal to a powerful body of brave men, 6000 strong, with twelve guns, amply provided with all the muniments of war,

[1] Kaye, i. 498, 504, 511.

* "Not one of the Russian caravans can now cross the desert without danger. It was in this manner that a Russian caravan from Orenburg, with goods belonging to our merchants, was pillaged by the armed bands of Khiva. No Russian merchant can now venture into that country without running the risk of losing his life or being made a prisoner. The inhabitants of Khiva are constantly making incursions into that part of the country of the Kirghiz which is at a distance from our lines, and, to crown all these insults, they are detaining several thousand Russian subjects in slavery. The number of these unfortunate wretches increases daily, for the peaceful fishermen on the banks of the Caspian are continually attacked and carried off as slaves to Khiva."—Proclamation of Emperor, October 28, 1839; *Moniteur*, 14th November 1839.

CHAP. XL.

1840.

very few of whom ever returned to tell the melancholy tale of their disasters to their countrymen.

83. Fresh difficulties in Affghanistan.

Scarcely was the British Government in India relieved from the dread awakened by this apparition of the Muscovite battalions on the table-land of central Asia, when they had more serious grounds for apprehension from the difficulties in Affghanistan, which were daily thickening around them. The skill of the British officers, however, who were in command of the different detachments which occupied the country, the bravery of the troops employed under them, and the superiority of their arms, especially in artillery, of which the Affghans were nearly destitute, for long chained victory to our standards, and preserved the country to appearance quiet, when in reality convulsed with angry passions. Favourable accounts at first came in from nearly all quarters. The Bamian Pass was occupied without resistance; the Khyber, though not without much fighting and considerable loss, was kept open by the aid of detachments from Jellalabad and the downward passage of Keane's army; and so confident was Macnaghten that the country was quietly settling down under the restored rule of the Douranee princes, that he sent for his wife from Hindostan, and despatched a body of horse under Edward Conolly to escort her from the plains of India. In vain Nott warned the Government of the coming dangers: his voice, as is generally the case with advice at variance with preconceived opinions, was disregarded.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 484, 486; Nott, i. 285, 358.

84. Disquieting intelligence from Herat and the Punjaub.

Meanwhile intelligence of the most disquieting nature was received from Herat. The liberality of the British Government to its Khan had been extreme; twelve lacs of rupees (£120,000) had been sent to its ruler, and two men of distinguished ability, Captains Todd and Shakespeare of the artillery, with Mr Abbot, had been long in the city to superintend the expenditure of that large sum on the fortifications. But in spite of all that they could do, great part of the money was misapplied or wasted by the venal or corrupt Affghan authorities, and at length it

was discovered that the vizier, Yar Mahommed, while living in affluence on British bounty, was superadding to his innumerable other treacheries that of intriguing with the Persians. So evident was the perfidy of this hoary traitor, that Macnaghten did not hesitate to recommend offensive measures against him, and the annexation of his state to the dominions of Shah Soojah. But Lord Auckland, who had his hands sufficiently full nearer home, and was beginning to feel, in the ceaseless demands for men and money from Affghanistan, the cost of operations in those distant mountain regions, wisely declined the proposal, and endeavoured to effect the object by increased advances of money. These Yar Mahommed willingly received, and meanwhile continued his intrigues with the Persian government, and carried his effrontery so far as actually to boast, in a letter to Mahommed Shah, the Persian ruler, which was afterwards laid before the Governor-general, that he was cajoling the English, who were freely spending their army at Herat while he was throwing himself into the arms of Persia.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 515, 521; Thornton, vi. 207-209.

85. Threatening aspect of things in the Punjaub.

The accounts from the Punjaub also were of a kind to excite some apprehensions, and evince the immensely increased circle of hostility in which the operations beyond the Indus had involved the British Government. The old chief who had founded the empire of Lahore, and, amidst all his faults to others, had ever been faithful in his alliance with the English, had expired shortly before the entrance of our troops into Cabul, and Nao-Nehal Singh, and the Sikh chiefs generally, who had succeeded to his power, were by no means equally well disposed towards us. The continued and apparently interminable passage of troops through their territories had not unnaturally excited their jealousy; and they asked themselves, not without reason, what chance the Sikh monarchy had of maintaining its independence, if the British power was established in a permanent manner in Affghanistan, and their dominions were used only as a stepping-stone betwixt

CHAP. XL.

1840.

it and Hindostan? Symptoms of disaffection had appeared in the auxiliary Sikh forces; one entire regiment had turned about when led to the attack of the Khyber, and never ceased flying till they were out of the pass; and the demands of the Sikh authorities for money, on account of the alleged damage done by the passage of the troops, were daily increasing. Already Macnaghten had declared, that unless the proceedings of their generals were checked, he did not see how a rupture with the Sikhs was to be avoided, and that "we should be in a very awkward predicament, unless measures are adopted for *macadamising the road through the Punjaub.*" [1]

[1] Mr Macnaghten to Governor-general, April 10 and 15, 1840; Kaye, i. 514, 515.

86. Progress and varied success of the insurgents.

In the mean time, affairs in Affghanistan itself were daily becoming more alarming. The Ghilzyes, a clan peculiarly hostile to the Douranee dynasty, were in open arms between Candahar and Cabul, and had entirely cut off the communication between these two places. Captain Anderson, of the Bengal artillery, with a regiment of foot, four guns, and three hundred horse, attacked a body of two thousand of them on the 16th May, and defeated them, after an obstinate fight, with great slaughter. This victory for a time stifled the insurrection in that quarter, but it only tended to increase the smothered hostility of the Ghilzyes, which was daily spreading and becoming more inveterate. The southern provinces were all in a blaze. Quettah was besieged, Kahun invested by the insurgents, and the newly-won fortress of Khelat was wrested from the chief to whom it had been assigned by the British, and Captain Loveday, who had distinguished himself in the assault, barbarously murdered by the Beloochees, who had risen in arms. Yet, amidst all these serious and daily increasing difficulties, which threatened in so alarming a manner his rear and communications, Macnaghten still persisted in the belief that nothing serious was to be apprehended;[2] that Affghanistan might be considered as pacified; and that now was the time to consolidate British power in central Asia, by an expe-

May 16.

June 28.

[2] Thornton, vi. 212-214; Kaye, i. 524, 535; Sir W. Macnaghten to Lord Auckland, Aug. 12, 1840; Ibid. 533.

dition against Herat, and its annexation to the dominions of Shah Soojah.

1840.

During the summer of 1840, the little detachment which had been sent to the Bamian Pass to watch the movements of Dost Mahommed, and had passed the winter amidst ice and snow in the caverns of that inhospitable region, was released from its forced inactivity, and pushing across the great mountain-range, it occupied the fort of Rajgah, which was found deserted, on the other side. But it soon became apparent that the occupation of this distant and isolated fort, surrounded by a hostile population, had been a mistake. Two companies of the Ghoorka regiment, sent out to escort an officer into it, were met by a superior body of Oosbeg horsemen, and only rescued from destruction, after having sustained a severe loss, by the opportune arrival of reinforcements sent out to extricate them from the fort. Meanwhile Dost Mahommed had been thrown into prison by the cruel and perfidious Khan of Bokhara, with whom he had taken refuge. He nearly fell a victim to a treacherous attempt upon his life; and having afterwards made his escape, his horse fell dead from fatigue, and he avoided detection only by dyeing his beard with ink, and joining a caravan which he accidentally overtook. At length he succeeded in joining the Wullee of Khooloom, an old ally, who received him in his misfortune with unshaken fidelity. Sheltered by this supporter, he again raised the standard of independence, and the Oosbegs having all flocked around him, he early in September advanced towards the Bamian Pass at the head of six thousand men. When reminded that his wives and children were in the hands of the British, he replied, "I have no family; I have buried my wives and children."[1]

87. Checks in the Bamian Pass.

June 29.

[1] Kaye, i. 540, 547; Thornton, vi. 230-234.

This fresh inroad of Dost Mahommed was soon attended with serious consequences, and excited the utmost alarm in the whole northern provinces of Affghanistan. Surrounded by an insurgent and inveterately

88. Further disasters in the Bamian.

CHAP. XL.

1840.

hostile population, it was soon found to be impossible to maintain the posts which had been occupied beyond the Hindoo Coosh, and accordingly both Rajgah and Syghan were evacuated by the Ghoorka regiment which held them, who retired, after sustaining severe loss, to Bamian. An Affghan regiment, which had been raised to support Shah Soojah, openly went over to the enemy. These successes spread the flame all through Affghanistan; the ferment soon became very great, both in Cabul and Candahar; and it was universally believed that Dost Mahommed had raised the whole strength of central Asia to the south of the Oxus, and was advancing with an innumerable army across the Hindoo Coosh to exterminate the Feringhee dogs, who were devouring the land of the true believers. So far did the panic proceed, that people in Cabul shut up their shops, and began to pack up or hide their effects; and the military authorities, to be prepared for the worst, occupied a gate of the Bala-Hissar by a company of British soldiers.[1]

[1] Sir W. Macnaghten to Major Rawlinson, Sept. 3, 9, and 12, 1840; Kaye, i. 547-552.

89. His defeat at the Bamian Pass. Sept. 18.

But at this very time, when affairs appeared most alarming, and the star of Dost Mahommed seemed again in the ascendant, an unexpected event occurred, which entirely changed the aspect of affairs, and postponed for a year the final catastrophe. His first step in advance had proved eminently unfortunate. Advancing, on the 18th September, with his brave but undisciplined Oosbegs, down the valley of Bamian, he was met by Lieutenant Murray Mackenzie, with two companies of sepoys, two of Ghoorkas, two guns, and four hundred Affghan horse. Despite the overwhelming superiority of numbers, which were at least five to one, Mackenzie advanced with the utmost intrepidity to the attack. Never was proved more clearly the superiority of European arms and discipline over the desultory onset of Asia than on this occasion. The Oosbegs, confident in their numbers, and animated with the strongest fanatical zeal, at first stood their ground firmly; but when the guns, which were nobly served,

were brought to bear upon them, they broke and fled, and were cut down in great numbers by the cavalry in pursuit. Dost Mahommed and his sons owed their escape to the fleetness of their horses; and soon after, Colonel Dennie, who had been advanced in support, had the satisfaction of concluding a treaty with the Wullee of Khooloom, on the summit of the lofty Dundun-i-Shykun, by which all the country to the south of Syghan was yielded to Shah Soojah, that to the north being reserved to the Wullee; and the latter agreed no longer to harbour Dost Mahommed, or give any support to his cause.[1]

[1] Macnaghten to Rawlinson, Sept. 21, 1840; Kaye, i. 553, 556.

90. Fresh efforts of Dost Mahommed.

"I am like a wooden spoon," said Dost Mahommed after this defeat; "you may throw me hither and thither, but I shall not be hurt." His deeds soon proved the truth of his words. Defeated on the Hindoo Coosh, he reappeared in the Kohistan, and again raised his standard. Macnaghten and the British officers in Cabul were in the middle of their rejoicings for his signal defeat in the Bamian Pass, when intelligence was received of his arrival, and the rapid progress of insurrection in that province. A force under Sir Robert Sale was despatched to the spot, to make head against the insurgents. He came up with them at a fortified post, called Tootumdurrah, which was speedily forced, and the Affghans put to flight, though with the loss of Edward Conolly, a lieutenant of cavalry, a noble youth, who had volunteered for the assault. Another fortified post, named Joolgah, was next attacked by Sale, of greater strength than the former; but though the stormers assaulted in the most gallant manner, led by Colonel Tronson of the 13th, the defences were too strong to be overcome, and the column of attack was withdrawn. The place was evacuated next day, and the works destroyed by the British; but this did by no means compensate the previous repulse, in a country where they were surrounded by an insurgent population so much their superiors in numbers,[2] and

Sept. 29.

Oct. 23.

[2] Thornton, vi. 222, 223; Kaye, i. 554, 559.

CHAP. XL.

1840.

everything depended on their keeping up their character for invincibility.

91. Threatening advance of Dost Mahommed.

But the career of Dost Mahommed, in active warfare at least, was drawing to a close, and that too in a way so strange and unaccountable, that it savours rather of the colours of romance than the sober tints of reality. Sale, with two thousand men, advanced farther into Kohistan, and came up with the Dost on the 18th at a fortified place of great strength, occupied by him with five thousand Affghans. The terror was very great in Cabul, from which he was only fifty miles distant, and preparations for a siege were already making in the Bala-Hissar. Macnaghten, therefore, urged upon Sale an immediate attack; but before the guns could be got up to breach the works, Dost Mahommed abandoned the position, which was taken possession of by the British. His cause, however, seemed to be daily gaining strength; volunteers flocked to him from all quarters, and some of Shah Soojah's soldiers deserted their British officers and joined the enemy. Encouraged by these favourable circumstances, Dost Mahommed again moved forward, and marched straight towards the capital. Having received intelligence of his movements, Sale advanced to meet him; and on the 2d November they came unexpectedly upon his force in the valley of Purwandurrah, occupying in strength the hills on one side, while the British were posted on the other.[1]

Oct. 27.

[1] Kaye, i. 562, 563; Thornton, vi. 225, 226.

92. His victory. Nov. 2.

Dost Mahommed had no intention at that time of giving battle, but an accidental circumstance precipitated a collision, attended with the most important consequences. He was withdrawing his troops up the hills, when a body of sepoy horse approached to turn his flank and disquiet his retreat. At the head of a small but determined band of Affghan horsemen, Dost Mahommed advanced to meet them. "Follow me," he cried, as he moved forward, "or I am a lost man." The Affghans followed in a manner worthy of such a leader, and the

British *officers* gallantly pressed on to the encounter. Already they had broken through the first troopers of the enemy, when, on looking round, they perceived that, so far from being followed, they had been deserted by their men. Either from disaffection or cowardice, the Hindoo horsemen had turned about and fled, without so much as crossing sabres with the enemy. Nothing remained to the officers but to cut their way back, which they did with heroic courage, though a very heavy loss. Lieutenants Crispin and Broadfoot were slain, after a desperate fight; a treacherous shot and the dagger of an assassin despatched Dr Lord, and Captains Fraser and Ponsonby only extricated themselves severely wounded from the fight. The swords of the Affghans were soon reeking with the blood of the recreant troopers who had occasioned the disaster, and they stood for some time waving their standards in front of the British line, without any one venturing to attack them. So disconcerted was Sir Alexander Burnes, who was with the detachment, at this disaster, that he wrote to Sir William Macnaghten that nothing remained but to fall back to Cabul, and that he would do well immediately to concentrate all the available troops there.[1]

[1] Sir A. Burnes to Sir W. Macnaghten, Nov. 4, 1840; Kaye, i. 563, 564; Thornton, vi. 226, 227.

93. His surrender. Nov. 4.

Macnaghten was making arrangements to carry into effect this disheartening advice, when it was announced to him, as he returned from his evening ride, that an Ameer requested to speak to him. "What Ameer?" asked Sir William. "Dost Mahommed Khan," replied the trooper who brought the message; and at the same instant Dost Mahommed appeared. Throwing himself from his horse, he surrendered his sword to the envoy, saying he was come to claim his protection. Sir William courteously returned the sword, and desired the Ameer to remount, which he accordingly did. He had been twenty-four hours in the saddle, and ridden above sixty miles, but he exhibited no symptoms of fatigue. A tent was pitched for him, in which he was indulged with every luxury, and

CHAP. XL. 1841.

scarcely guarded. He declared that he had no desire to escape, and that, having chosen an asylum, he would keep it. He wrote the same evening to his sons and his family, who were already in the hands of the British, whom he eagerly inquired after. The only anxiety he evinced was when a report got up in the camp that it was the intention of the British Government *to banish him to London;* but he was soon appeased on being assured that this was not the case. It would appear that, since the storming of Ghuznee and the defeat in the Bamian, he despaired of the ability of Affghanistan to contend in the long-run with Great Britain; and that he purposely chose the day succeeding a brilliant exploit to withdraw from a contest become hopeless, but from which he could now retire with unstained personal honour. He had no reason to complain of his reception, for he was treated in the camp with the very highest distinction, and waited upon by all the principal officers in the army. On the 12th November he set out from Cabul, under a strong escort, for Hindostan. "I hope," said Macnaghten to the Governor-general soon after, "that the Dost will be treated with liberality. The case of Shah Soojah is not parallel. The Shah had no claim upon us. We had no hand in depriving him of his dominion; whereas *we ejected the Dost, who never offended us, in support of our policy, of which he was the victim.*" [1]

[1] Kaye, i. 566, 567; Thornton, vi. 228, 229; Sir W. Macnaghten to Mr Robertson, Jan. 12, 1841, MS. Correspondence; Kaye, i. 568.

94. Increased tranquillity of the country.

The surrender of Dost Mahommed was an event of immense importance to Affghanistan. Though it did not remove the causes of discontent, nor abate the animosity of the natives at the hated Feringhees, yet it deprived them of a head, and took from their combination its most formidable character—that of unity of direction. The insurgents, generally defeated and universally dispirited, returned to their homes, leaving the British posts unassailed. Sir William Macnaghten, deeming the insurrection at an end, wrote to the Governor-general that now was the time to secure a safe passage for the troops through the Punjaub;

and the officers of the army, who had so recently complained of being overworked, now declared that they were dying of ennui. Two events, which occurred at the same time as the surrender of Dost Mahommed, contributed eminently to tranquillise the country. On the 3d November, General Nott reoccupied Khelat, which had been abandoned by its garrison, and on the same day Major Boscawen defeated a considerable body of insurgents, under the son of the ex-chief of that fortress. On the 1st December a still more important action took place near Kotree, where the same chief was attacked by Colonel Marshall, with nine hundred sepoys, sixty horse, and two guns, and, after a gallant action, totally defeated, with the loss of five hundred men slain on the spot, including all the chiefs, and their whole guns and baggage. This signal defeat, and the severity of the weather, closed all efforts on the part of the enemy in that quarter for the remainder of the year.[1]

Nov. 3.

Dec. 1.

[1] Sir W. Macnaghten to Governor-general, Dec. 9, 1840; Kaye, i. 570; Thornton, vi. 229, 230; Kaye, i. 563-572.

95. Renewed insurrection, and victory of Nott. Jan. 3.

While the snow lay on the ground, which it did for four months, this state of compulsory quiescence continued without interruption. The first symptoms of a renewed insurrection occurred in the end of the year, in the neighbourhood of Candahar. The political direction of that province was in the hands of Major Rawlinson,* an officer of equal talent, judgment, and address, intimately acquainted with Eastern customs and feelings; and the military under the direction of General Nott, a noble veteran of the Indian army, deservedly beloved by the soldiery, but blunt in manners, free of speech, and somewhat difficult to act with in a subordinate situation. Unfortunately, a coldness existed between him and Sir John Keane, owing to his having been superseded by the latter in command, in favour of General Williams, from a narrow-minded prejudice, of long standing in the Queen's army, against the Company's service. It was not long

* Now Sir Henry Rawlinson, the celebrated Assyrian traveller and antiquarian.

CHAP. XL.

1841.

before Nott had an opportunity of giving proof of his talents in the field. Early in January a body of fifteen hundred insurgent horse showed itself in the neighbourhood of Candahar. They were attacked by a detachment of sepoys under Captain Farrington, broken and dispersed. But, notwithstanding this check, the insurrection continued and spread, insomuch that one of our best-informed political agents began to entertain suspicions that Shah Soojah himself, weary of the perilous protection of the British troops, was no stranger to the movement. Certain it is that the spirit of disaffection was even stronger among the Douranee chiefs than the Ghilzyes, and that delegates from them were traversing the whole country, instigating the people to revolt. In addition to this, intelligence was received from Herat to the effect that Yar Mahommed, the faithless vizier of that place, in addition to his innumerable other treacheries, had now, when enriched by British subsidies, openly joined the Persians; insomuch that Colonel Todd had broken up the British mission there, and was on his way back to Affghanistan. Such was the animosity of the old vizier that Shah Kamran, the sovereign, told one of the English officers, in a private audience, that but for his protection "not a Feringhee would have been left alive." As it was, the seizure of all their property was openly discussed in the vizier's council; and it was only by their precipitate retreat that the members of the mission were saved from indignities of the worst kind.[1]

[1] Macnaghten to Rawlinson, Feb. 25 and Mar. 2, 1841; Kaye, i. 579-589; Thornton, vi. 232, 233.

96. Victory of Col. Wymer near Khelat-i-Ghilzye. May 19.

It appeared ere long that this open defection of the government of Herat was part of the general combination for the expulsion of the British and Shah Soojah from Affghanistan, of which the irruption of Dost Mahommed over the Hindoo Coosh was the commencement. Early in May the Ghilzyes in western Affghanistan appeared in great force in the neighbourhood of Khelat-i-Ghilzye, in order to disturb the operations in progress for the rebuilding of the walls of that fortress, so important as

commanding the road from Candahar to Cabul. Nott sent Colonel Wymer, an able officer, with 1200 infantry, some horse, and four guns, to dislodge them. The enemy's force, before the action began, had increased to 5000 men, and they advanced in three columns, with great steadiness, to the attack. They were received with the utmost gallantry by Wymer's infantry and Hawkins' guns, the steady well-directed fire of which, after a desperate battle of five hours' duration, obliged them to retire with very heavy loss. This was a glorious victory, reflecting the utmost credit on the officers and men engaged in it; but the courage with which the enemy fought foreshadowed a serious and exhausting contest; and it was discovered after the action that the natives had had too good cause for exasperation in the oppressive conduct of some of the British subordinate agents, especially in the collection of the revenue, and the open extortions of Prince Timour's followers.[1]

[1] Nott, i. 194, 207; Burnes to Lynch, June 30, 1841; Macnaghten to Rawlinson, May 5, 1841; Kaye, i. 588-593.

97. Progress of the insurrection of the Douranees in eastern Affghanistan.

While these operations were going on in western Affghanistan, the proceedings of the Douranees in the eastern province were not less alarming. In the beginning of July, Akhtar Khan, an indomitable chief, was in arms before Ghirek with 3000 men. Captain Woodburn, a dashing officer, who commanded one of the Shah's regiments, was sent against him with 900 infantry, two guns, and a small body of Affghan horse. The enemy made a spirited resistance; but the discharges of Cooper's guns, and the steady fire of Woodburn's infantry, repulsed every attack, though the treachery of the Affghan horse rendered it impossible to follow up the success in the way that might otherwise have been effected. The moral effect of these victories, however, was very considerable, insomuch that the month of August passed over with greater appearances of peace than any which had occurred since the British troops occupied the country.[2] So flattering were these appearances, so firmly did the British power appear to be established by repeated victories,

[2] Nott, i. 250; Kaye, i. 599-603; Thornton, vi. 237-239; Macnaghten to Robertson, Aug. 20, 1841; Kaye, i. 603.

CHAP. XL. 1841.

and so much were the Affghans disheartened by the numerous defeats they had experienced, that had not infatuation subsequently got possession of the military chiefs at Cabul, and cruel acts of oppression alienated the natives, there seems no doubt that the expedition, notwithstanding the obvious dangers with which it was environed, might have been attended with entire success.

98. Last insurrection.

Appearances in the course of the autumn, however, gradually became more serious. Several of the Douranee chiefs withdrew from the court of Shah Soojah, the ostensible grounds of complaint being the withdrawal of some pecuniary allowances which they had been accustomed to receive as a consideration for keeping the country under their orders quiet. Having taken their leave, the first thing they did was to begin plundering caravans, a proceeding too much in accordance with the usual habits of Affghanistan to excite much attention. But it was soon evident that it was done systematically, and with the design of raising the country. Akhtar Khan was soon at the head of the insurrection in western Affghanistan, which spread so rapidly and assumed such proportions, that Rawlinson wrote in the most anxious terms concerning it to Macnaghten, who could only recommend him to seize the rebel chief, and hang him as high as Haman. Early in August, Captain Griffin was sent out against him with 350 sepoys, 800 horse, and four guns. On the 17th he came up with him, strongly posted, with 3500 men, in a succession of walled gardens and mud forts, from which a heavy fire was kept up on the assailants. The attack, however, was completely successful. The enclosures were carried by the foot-soldiers with the bayonet, the horse charged with terrific effect, and the Douranees were defeated and dispersed with great slaughter. Shortly before, Colonel Chambers, with a detachment of 1500 men, came up with and dispersed a body of Ghilzyes, who were for the most part cut down or made prisoners.[1]

Aug. 5.

[1] Macnaghten to Robertson, Aug. 20, 1841; Kaye, i. 598-606; Thornton, vi. 241-243.

99. State of affairs at Cabul.

These repeated victories were followed by a lull for the time, and gave hopes of an entire and final pacification of the country. But in reality they had the very opposite effect, and became instrumental, from the false confidence they inspired in the political and military authorities at Cabul, in inducing the terrible calamities which so soon followed.* Macnaghten looked around him, and, as he himself said, saw "that everything was quiet from Dan to Beersheba;" and so persuaded was he that the whole Affghanistan difficulties were over, that he was about to retire in honour and affluence from a life of incessant anxiety and activity. The military command at Cabul was in the hands of General Elphinstone, Sir Willoughby Cotton having retired in the preceding spring. Elphinstone was a veteran of the Wellington school, who bore a Waterloo medal, where he had commanded a regiment; and a man of high connections, aristocratic influence, and most agreeable manners.* But he was entirely unacquainted with Eastern warfare, advanced in years, a martyr to the gout, which rendered him utterly unfit for personal activity, or even sometimes to sit on horseback, and, as the event proved, though personally brave, possessed of none of the mental energy or foresight which might supply its place. How he should have been selected by Lord Auckland for this arduous situation, in the full knowledge of these disqualifications, when such men as Pollock, Nott, and Sale were on the spot, ready and qualified to have discharged its duties, is one of the mysteries of official conduct which will never probably be cleared up, for every one now shuns its responsibility. High aristocratic influence at home, coupled with an illiberal and unfounded jealousy of the Company's service on the part of our military authorities, were probably the secret springs of the movement. The nation would do well to ponder on them, for they all but lost us our Indian empire.[1]

[1] Kaye, i. 610-612; Nott, ii. 256-348.

* He was a relation of Lord Elphinstone, at that time Governor of Bombay.

CHAP. XL.

1841.

100. Forces at and near Cabul in Oct. 1840.

It was not long before the fatal effects of this appointment appeared; but in justice to the memory of a gallant but ill-fated officer, it must be added, that grave faults had been committed at Cabul before he took the command. The force now at or near Cabul was very considerable, and had it been judiciously posted and skilfully directed, was perfectly adequate to have maintained that important post against any forces the Affghans could have brought against it. It consisted of the 13th and 44th Queen's foot, the 5th, 35th, 37th, and 54th Bengal native infantry, the 5th Bengal native cavalry, a troop of foot, and another of horse artillery, two regiments of the Shah's infantry, a train of mountain guns, and some Hindostanee and Affghán horse. Of these, however, the Queen's 13th, the 35th, and 37th native infantry, and some of the cavalry and artillery, were under Sir Robert Sale at Jellalabad, or keeping up the communication with the capital by Gundamuck and the Coord Cabul Pass. Thus the force actually at Cabul, or in its immediate vicinity, consisted of one European regiment (the 44th), two sepoy, and two Affghan regiments, and a native regiment of cavalry, with the artillery; in all 5000 fighting men, who were encumbered with 15,000 camp-followers. But they enjoyed two advantages, which gave them a decided superiority over the enemy. The first of these was the possession of a train of artillery, with ample ammunition, far superior in weight and efficiency to any which the Affghans could bring against them. The second, the possession of the Bala-Hissar, a citadel of great strength, situated on a steep height commanding every part of the city, and utterly impregnable, when garrisoned by British troops and defended by British guns, against the whole collected forces of Affghanistan.[1]

[1] Thornton, vi. 251, 252; Kaye, i. 611, 612.

With an infatuation so extraordinary, that it almost seems to afford an instance of the old saying, "Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat," all those advantages had been voluntarily thrown away, and the troops placed

CHAP. XL.

1841.

in positions where, so far from being able to act offensively against the Affghans, they were unable to take any effective steps to defend themselves. Instead of locating the British forces and their magazines in the Bala-Hissar, where there was ample accommodation for them, and they would have been in perfect security, they were placed in cantonments *outside both the citadel and the walls*, in a low situation, commanded in different directions by heights and buildings which swept them on every side. These cantonments, so situated, were of great extent, above a mile in circumference, and surrounded by a rampart so low that a British officer backed a small pony to scramble down the ditch and over the wall. The troops, who had been at first placed in the Bala-Hissar, were withdrawn by Macnaghten's orders *to make way for a hundred and sixty ladies of the harem.* To crown the whole, the entire commissariat stores, with the provisions for the army for the winter, were placed neither in the Bala-Hissar nor the cantonments, *but in a small fort outside both*, and connected with the cantonments by an undefended passage, commanded by an empty fort and a walled garden, inviting the occupation of the enemy. And this under the direction of officers trained in the Peninsular War, and boasting of having been bred in the school of Wellington![1] *

101. Infatuation of the defensive arrangements at Cabul.

[1] Kaye, i. 612, 613; Calcutta Review.

These infatuated measures had been commenced before, and were in progress when General Elphinstone assumed the command; so that he is responsible only for their having been carried on and persisted in during the summer and autumn, when every day was adding to the proofs of the enormous peril with which they were attended. One fifth of the sums lavished upon the traitor Yar

102. Conduct of the British.

* The engineer officers must be entirely relieved from this reproach. They strongly urged the placing the troops in the Bala-Hissar, and the erecting of additional works and barracks on that important fortress, but in vain. Durand, the chief engineer, was particularly urgent on this point. The responsibility of neglecting or overruling his advice rests with Sir William Macnaghten who sacrificed everything to a show of security.—KAYE, i. 613, note.

CHAP. XL. 1841.

Mahommed to add to the fortifications of Herat, would have rendered the Bala-Hissar utterly impregnable, and placed the British force in perfect security. "The fine climate," says the eloquent annalist of the war, "braced and exhilarated the British officers. There was no lack of amusement; they rode races, they played at cricket, they went out fishing, they got up dramatic entertainments. When winter came, and the lakes were frozen, they astonished the natives by skating on the ice. But amidst these harmless amusements there were others which filled the natives with the intensest hate. The inmates of the zenana were not unwilling to visit the quarters of the Christian stranger. For two long years had this shame been burning into the hearts of the Çabulese; complaints were made, but they were made in vain. The scandal was open, undisguised, notorious; redress was not to be obtained; it went on till it became intolerable; and the injured began then to see that the only remedy was in their own hands."[1] *

[1] Kaye, i. 614, 615; Martin, 438; Shah Soojah to Lord Auckland, Jan. 1842; Ibid.

103. Breaking out of the insurrection, and death of Burnes. Nov. 2.

But the hand of fate was upon them; and an aggression upon an independent State, alike unjustifiable in right and indefensible in expedience, was about to be overtaken by a terrible retribution. For some time it had been observed that symptoms of hostility were evinced by the inhabitants of Cabul towards the British troops, and that stones were thrown at the sepoys from the roofs of the houses; but these incidents excited little attention, so resolute were all concerned not to admit that there was any ground for apprehension. On the evening of the 1st November, Burnes congratulated Macnaghten on his approaching departure during a period of profound peace, and at that very moment a conclave of chiefs was held in his immediate vicinity, to concert the means of an imme-

* "I told the envoy what was going on, and was not listened to. I told him that complaints were daily made to me of Affghan women being taken to Burnes's moonshee, and of their drinking wine at his house; and of women having been taken to the Chasme, and of my having witnessed it."—SHAH SOOJAH to LORD AUCKLAND, January 17, 1842. MARTIN, 438.

diate and most formidable insurrection. It broke out simultaneously in several places at once in the city, and with the utmost violence. Instantly the shops were plundered, the houses of the British officers attacked, and their servants insulted and threatened. Among the first houses assailed were those of Sir Alexander Burnes, and Captain Johnson, the paymaster of the Shah's forces. Burnes had been warned of his danger, and recommended to retire to the Bala-Hissar; but he bravely resolved to remain at his post. With a mistaken lenity, he forbade his sepoy guard to fire on the insurgents, and preferred haranguing them from a gallery in the upper part of his house. He might as well have addressed so many wild beasts. Nothing was heard in the crowd but angry voices clamouring for the heads of the English officers, wild dissonant cries, and threats of vengeance. Presently shots issued from the infuriated multitude thirsting for blood and plunder, and a general assault upon the houses was made. Broadfoot, who sold his life dearly, was the first to fall; a ball pierced his heart. Meanwhile a party of the insurgents had got possession of Burnes' stables, and found their way into his garden, where they were calling upon him to come down. He did so in disguise, seeking to escape; he was recognised, set upon, and murdered, with his brother, Lieut. Burnes, of the Bombay army. The sepoys who composed the guard fought nobly when permitted to do so, but they were overpowered by numbers, and cut off to a man. From this scene of murder the mob proceeded to the treasury, which they forced open by setting fire to the gateway. The guard of sepoys, twenty-eight in number, were massacred, every human being in the house was murdered, treasure to the amount of £17,000 carried off, and the building set on fire and burnt to the ground.[1] Emboldened by the impunity with which these crimes were committed, the mob now gave full rein to their passions, burning houses, plundering shops, and massacring men, women, and children in every

[1] Thornton, vi. 252-254; Martin, 438, 439; Kaye, ii. 5-15; Eyre's Journal, 18, 30.

CHAP. XL. 1841.

part of the city indiscriminately; and all this when five thousand British troops were in cantonments within half an hour's march, not one of whom was ordered out to arrest the disorders! The Affghans themselves admitted that a hundred men, resolutely commanded, would have sufficed at the outset to crush the insurrection. *

104. Inactivity and supineness of those in command of the troops.

During this eventful day, big, as the event proved, with the whole fate of the Affghanistan expedition, a brigade of troops, under General Shelton, was moved, with four guns, into the Bala-Hissar, *but the remainder of the troops were kept in cantonments.* No step was taken to send assistance to Sir Alexander Burnes or Captain Johnson; and the only effort attempted to check this revolt was by the Shah, who despatched a small body of troops, with two guns, against the insurgents, who were too weak to effect anything at the late period when they were brought into action, and with difficulty effected their retreat with their guns. Brigadier Shelton in vain urged that not a moment should be lost in acting vigorously against the enemy. Orders were sent to Captain Trevor, who with a regiment of sepoys lay at Coord Cabul, to advance to the capital, which he immediately did, and next day orders and counter-orders were given, but nothing was done. Major Griffiths also came up from the same place, having bravely fought his way through several thousand insurgents; yet nothing was attempted to avenge Burnes' murder, or the outraged majesty of the British name.[1] The consequence was that

Nov. 3.

[1] Shelton's Report, Nov. 2, 1841; Kaye, ii. 21-28; Thornton, vi. 254-255.

* "Not only I, but several other officers, have spoken to Affghans on the subject; there has never been a dissenting voice that, had a small party gone into the town prior to the plunder of my treasury and the murder of Burnes, the insurrection would have been instantly quashed. This was also the opinion of Captain Trevor, at that time living in the town. Captain Mackenzie has given an equally emphatic opinion to the same effect. The mob at first did not exceed a hundred men—thirty only, in the first instance, were sent to surround Burnes' house. One and all of the Affghans declared that the slightest exhibition of energy on our part in the first instance, more especially in reinforcing my post and that of Trevor, would at once have decided the Kuzilbashes, and all over whom they possessed any influence, in our favour."—JOHNSON'S *MS. Journal*; EYRE'S *Journal*; KAYE, ii. 17, 18.

the insurgents, emboldened by impunity, increased rapidly in numbers, spread themselves out in every direction, occupied post after post as they were successively abandoned by the British, and before nightfall on the second day the whole capital was in their possession. The only attempt made to impede them was with three companies and two guns, who were of course unable to effect anything.

105. Loss of the Commissariat Fort. Nov. 5.

The extreme danger of the British position was now apparent to all, and Macnaghten, seriously alarmed, wrote urgent letters both to Captain M'Gregor to send up Sale's force from Jellalabad, and to Candahar to stop the return of the troops on their march to India through that city, and send them back to his relief. But neither of these succours could be expected for some weeks, and meanwhile the danger was pressing, and such as could only be met by instant and decisive measures. The artillery, always weak, and inadequate to the wants of the troops, was divided between the cantonments and the Bala-Hissar, so that neither had an adequate amount of that necessary arm. The Commissariat Fort, as already mentioned, was situated outside both the Bala-Hissar and the cantonments, and though it contained the whole provisions and stores of the army, it had no guns, and was garrisoned only by eighty sepoys, under Ensign Warren. Between this fort and the cantonments was another fort, called the Shereef's Fort, which commanded the passage between the two. General Elphinstone had on the preceding day proposed to occupy this fort with his own troops, but Macnaghten opposed it, declaring it would be impolitic to do so. The consequence was, it was occupied by the enemy, whose marksmen swarmed around it in every direction, and kept up from behind the stone enclosure which surrounded it a deadly fire upon any reinforcements sent out to support Warren's little party in the Commissariat Fort. In vain that officer sent message after message to Elphinstone to announce that he was hard pressed, and if not relieved

CHAP. XL.

1841. Nov. 4.

would either perish or be obliged to evacuate his post. With characteristic indecision, the old General listened to everything but did nothing; orders were repeatedly given and countermanded for the march of a detachment to reinforce Warren; and at length Captain Boyd, of the commissariat, obtained an order for the troops destined to that service to march at two in the morning. But it was again delayed till daybreak, when it was too late. The little garrison, seeing no prospect of relief, had escaped by working a hole from the interior of the fort, with tools sent the preceding night, intended to facilitate the withdrawal of the stores. All the magazines, including the whole supplies for the army, with the exception of another in a still more exposed situation, to be immediately noticed, fell into the enemy's hands, among whom this easy and unlooked-for advantage excited unbounded confidence and enthusiasm.[1]

[1] Elphinstone's Report, Nov. 5, 1841; Kaye, ii. 29, 33; Thornton, vi. 258-260.

106. Further loss of stores.

This disaster was immediately followed by another hardly less serious. In May 1841, 17,000 maunds of ottah or ground wheat, in general use in the country, had been stored by Captain Johnson in the Bala-Hissar for the use of the Shah's troops; but Macnaghten, in spite of that officer's remonstrances, insisted *on its being removed*, and placed in some camel-sheds on the outskirts of the city, where it was almost entirely undefended. Early on the morning of the 2d November, this important post was attacked by a large body of insurgents. Captain Mackenzie was in charge of it, with a small garrison, encumbered with women and children. He made a noble defence, and held the fort till his men had expended every cartridge in defending it. In vain reinforcements or succour of some sort were urgently applied for; in vain "every eye was turned towards the cantonment, looking for the glittering bayonets through the trees."[2] Not a man came to their relief, although even a trifling demonstration from headquarters would have turned the scale in their favour, and brought the whole

[2] Johnson's Journal; Mackenzie's Journal; Kaye, ii. 33-34; Eyre's Narrative, 44, 47, 59; Thornton, vi. 256, 257.

Kuzilbashes to their side. At length, after having defended the fort for two entire days, and fired away his last cartridge, Mackenzie, finding that no succour was to be sent to him, yielded to the entreaties of his men, who prayed to be led against the enemy, and with heroic valour cut his way through them back to the cantonments. The fort itself, with the whole grain it contained, fell into the enemy's hands.

107. Fatal effect of these losses.

The loss of these two forts, with the whole magazines and commissariat stores of the army, was decisive of the fate of the campaign, not only from the starvation which it brought home to the door of the British forces, but from the depression which it produced among our men, and the corresponding exaltation which it induced in the enemy. Every man on both sides now saw that the maintenance of the capital through the winter by the invaders was impossible, for they had lost their whole supplies and magazines, and it was out of the question to think of forming others, with the ground covered with snow, and every village in the hands of hostile multitudes, with weapons which they knew well how to use in their hands. Reinforcements from India were only likely to augment the danger, even supposing they could make their way through the terrible defiles and insurgent population of Affghanistan, for they would only augment the number of useless mouths in the garrison. The knowledge of these circumstances excited the utmost indignation and despondency in the British forces, and in a similar degree excited and encouraged the Affghans. The charm of British invincibility was broken. The intelligence of the capture of the Commissariat Fort spread like wildfire, and brought thousands upon thousands into the scene of conquest, to share in the plunder of the Christian dogs. The forts soon resembled so many ant-hills, where multitudes were swarming, every one carrying off some part of the spoil ;[1] and all this within four hundred yards of a fortified cantonment, where five thousand British troops, in

[1] Eyre's Journal, 48, 54, 59; Kaye, ii. 35-37; Thornton, vi. 257-259.

CHAP. XL.

1841.

indignant silence and constrained inactivity, were witnesses of the disgraceful scene!

108. Storm of Mahommed Shereef's Fort. Nov. 6.

At length the loud clamour of brave men, restrained by incapacity and irresolution in their chiefs from doing what their own courage prompted, became so violent that it was resolved to attempt something. On the 6th a storming party, consisting of one company of the 44th and two sepoy regiments, was told off to assault Mahommed Shereef's Fort, the possession of which by the enemy had told so severely upon us in the preceding days, and it was carried with a vigour worthy of British troops. Ensign Raban, who commanded the forlorn hope, was killed as he planted the colours on the breach. A variety of desultory actions ensued, in which the British were so successful, that it was evident, if they had been directed with ordinary capacity and resolution, a general battle might have been brought on, and the enemy totally defeated. At the same time, the activity and intelligence of the commissariat officers, Captains Boyd and Johnson, procured supplies from the neighbouring villages; and the troops having been put on half rations, the difficulty of subsistence, which at the moment was the most pressing, was surmounted. But General Elphinstone apprehended an equally serious want, which was that of ammunition; and such was his alarm, that on the same day he wrote to Sir William Macnaghten, recommending a capitulation.[1]* In point of fact, the event proved that there was ammunition in abundance for two months' consumption. Plans were submitted to the General for recapturing the

[1] Lady Sale's Journal, 47; Macnaghten to Mohun Lal, Nov. 7, 1841; Kaye, ii. 39-41; Eyre, 60-64; Thornton, vi. 264-266.

* "We have temporarily, and I hope permanently, got over the difficulty of provisioning. Our next consideration is ammunition, and it is a very serious and awful one. We have expended a great quantity, and therefore it becomes worthy of thought on your part how desirable it is that our operations should not be protracted by anything *in treating* that might tend to a continuance of the present state of things. Do not suppose from this that I wish to recommend or am advocating humiliating terms, or such as would reflect disgrace on us, but the fact of ammunition must not be lost sight of. Our case is not yet desperate. I do not mean to impress that, but it must be borne in mind that it goes very fast."—GENERAL ELPHINSTONE to SIR W. MACNAGHTEN, November 6, 1841; KAYE, ii. 39.

Commissariat Fort, but he could not be prevailed on to adopt any of them. He was evidently desperate, and thought only of arranging a capitulation. Attempts were made to buy off the rebel chiefs; but though 500,000 rupees (£50,000) was offered, nothing effective was done; and it had become evident that matters had come to that pass, that it was by iron, not gold, that deliverance could alone be looked for.

109. Jealousy between Elphinstone and Shelton.

The extremely debilitated state of General Elphinstone's health rendered it absolutely necessary that he should have a coadjutor of younger years and greater vigour, and Brigadier Shelton was sent from the Bala-Hissar, with a gun and a regiment of the Shah's troops, for that purpose, into the cantonments. His arrival was hailed with joy by the troops, who regarded him as a deliverer. He did not possess popular manners, and it was soon painfully apparent that no cordial co-operation between him and General Elphinstone was to be expected; but he was known to have manly qualities and undoubted personal courage. The great extent of the fortifications, the slender supplies of provisions, the desponding faces of officers and men around him, at once revealed the critical nature of their situation. They had only provisions for three days' consumption in store, and the works required so large a force to guard them that few could be spared for external operations. Shelton endeavoured to correct what he conceived defective, and to put the cantonments in a better posture of defence; but he was thwarted by the jealousy of Elphinstone, who reminded him that he was the commander-in-chief, and complained that he did not receive from his brigadier that cordial co-operation which he was entitled to have expected. Thus orders were given and countermanded; plans were discussed, and their decision adjourned; and it soon became too evident that Shelton's arrival, by producing disunion in the military councils, would render the position of the troops, if possible, worse than it had been before.[1]

[1] Shelton's Statement; Elphinstone's Statement; Kaye, ii. 48-51; Thornton, vi. 263, 264.

CHAP. XL.

1841.

110. Storming of the Ricka-bashee Fort. Nov. 10.

Macnaghten, with whom every bold counsel from this time forward originated, had strongly urged an attack on the Ricka-bashee Fort, situated at the north-eastern angle of the cantonments, and from which the walls were commanded, and he had even taken upon himself the whole responsibility of the undertaking. Elphinstone at last consented, and two thousand men were put under Shelton's command for the assault. But before the orders to move forward were given, Elphinstone's old irresolution returned, and the expedition was delayed. It was undertaken next day; but by that time the fort had been much strengthened, and the Affghans were as much elated as the British were dispirited by the delay. Two European companies of the 44th, and four native companies, were told off for the assault, under the command of Colonel Mackrell, who led the storm in the most gallant manner. Colonel Mackrell and Lieutenant Bird, of the Shah's 6th infantry, forced their way into the fort, and already the shout of victory was heard within its walls, when the column of sepoys, advancing in double-quick time in support, being charged in flank by a body of Affghan horse, took to flight, drawing a large part of the stormers, both European and native, after them. They were rallied by Shelton, who evinced in that trying moment the courage of a hero, and again brought up to the assault. A second time they were charged in flank, and fled; again they were rallied and brought back to the attack by Shelton. Meantime the brave men, a mere handful in number, who had forced their way with Mackrell and Bird into the fort, being unsupported, were beset by a crowd of Affghans who had fled on the first storm, but now, seeing the repulse of the column in support, returned with loud shouts to the attack. Mackrell fell mortally wounded, after defending himself with undaunted courage. Bird, with two sepoys, sought refuge in a stable, the door of which they barricaded, and before they were relieved had slain thirty of the enemy with their own hands.[1] At length the fort was

[1] Eyre's Journal, 67, 73; Shelton's Statement; Kaye, ii. 51-53; Thornton, vi. 264-266.

carried by Shelton at the head of the support, and the gallant three liberated from their perilous prison.*

111. Results of this success.

On the fall of the Ricka-bashee Fort, several smaller ones in the vicinity were abandoned by the enemy, in one of which a considerable supply of grain was found. Shelton followed the enemy, who showed themselves in some force on the hills; but the horse-artillery opened on them with such effect that they retired into the city. Although the capture of the fort was checkered by disaster, and far from being creditable to the arrangements of the generals-in-chief, who, with a large force of cavalry in the cantonments, had allowed the storming columns to be charged in flank by the Affghan horse, yet its ultimate success was eminently favourable to the British arms. The envoy declared it had averted the necessity of an inglorious retreat. There can be no doubt that, had it been vigorously followed up, it promised the most auspicious results. For several days after it the Affghans desisted from their attacks; they were obviously checked in their career. The commissaries, whose activity was above all praise, turned the breathing-time to good account in the purchase and securing of provisions. The villagers, relieved from their apprehensions, began to bring supplies freely into the camp; and the envoy, seeing the military commander hopeless of extrication from the surrounding difficulties by honourable means, renewed his efforts to sow dissension among the chiefs by profuse offers of money.[1]

1 Thornton, vi. 264-267; Kaye, ii. 53, 55, 57; Johnson's Journal; Eyre's Journal.

112. Actions on the heights. Nov. 13.

But this lull was of short duration. The Affghans, seeing that the success of the 10th was not followed up, again showed themselves a few days after in great force on the heights overlooking the camp, and began to cannonade the cantonments. With the utmost difficulty Macnaghten persuaded the General to send out a force

* Such was the panic occasioned by the Affghan charge, even among the European troops, that when Major Scott of the 44th "called on volunteers to follow him, only one man answered the appeal. His name was Stuart, and he was most deservedly made a sergeant on the request of Sir W. Macnaghten."—THORNTON, vi. 265.

CHAP. XL. 1841.

to dislodge them, and this was done only by his taking upon himself the whole responsibility of the measure. A strong detachment of foot and horse, embracing six companies of the 44th with two guns, was sent out under Brigadier Shelton, and it advanced to the attack with great vigour and intrepidity. But again the Affghan horse charged them in flank; the assailed British fired wildly and without aim, chiefly in the air, and the enemy's cavalry went clean through them from side to side. But the check was only momentary. The British troops reformed at the foot of the hill; Eyre's guns were brought to bear upon the enemy, and by a gallant charge of Anderson's horse up the slope, the enemy were beaten back and the guns taken. Macnaghten despatched the most urgent orders to complete the triumph of the day by bringing both guns into the cantonments, but one only could be got off. The other was exposed to so heavy a fire from the Affghan marksmen, that it was found impossible to bring it away.[1]

[1] Lady Sale's Journal; Eyre's Journal, 72-74; Kaye, ii. 59-61; Thornton, vi. 267, 268.

113. Macnaghten calls up troops from Jellalabad and Candahar, which are not sent.

This success again rendered the enemy quiet for some days; and Macnaghten took advantage of it to send the most urgent letters, both to M'Gregor, the political agent at Jellalabad, and to Rawlinson at Candahar, to send their whole disposable forces up to the relief of the troops now besieged in the capital.* These able officers were placed in a situation of great difficulty by these requisitions. On the one hand, the envoy at Cabul was their superior officer, whose orders they were bound to obey; and the very existence of the troops in the capital might depend on succours being instantly sent forward to their relief. On the other hand, the state of affairs at Cabul seemed so desperate, from the destruction of

* "Our situation is a very precarious one, but with your assistance we should do well; and you must render it to us, if you have any regard for our lives, or for the honour of our country. We may be said to be in a state of siege, and had we not made two desperate sallies, we should ere now have been annihilated. We have provisions for only ten days, but when you arrive we shall be able to command the resources of the country."—MACNAGHTEN to M'GREGOR, November 14, 1841; KAYE, ii. 63.

the commissariat stores and the scanty supplies of the garrison, that it appeared to be running into certain destruction to bring up any additional mouths to share them. After much and anxious deliberation, M'Gregor and Sale resolved to disobey the order, and retain their troops at Jellalabad; and although Rawlinson and Nott despatched a force from Candahar, yet it returned to that capital, after having proceeded a few marches towards Cabul, upon finding the draught-cattle perishing by the way. It is impossible to say with any degree of certainty whether or not Nott and Sale did right in taking upon themselves the responsibility of disobeying their orders, for disaster stared them in the face whatever they did. On the one hand, going forward to Cabul seemed only swelling the array of Affghan captives or victims, and depriving the British Government of the chief forces on which they could rely to preserve any part of their dominion in Affghanistan; on the other, to disobey the order was to leave the troops in the capital to their fate, virtually abandon Shah Soojah to the vengeance of his rebellious subjects, and relinquish the whole objects for which the expedition had been undertaken. In so difficult a matter, and when only a choice of evils remained to the British officers, history cannot pass sentence one way or the other upon those exposed to the crisis. But in justice to Macnaghten and Elphinstone, it must be added that the non-arrival of the troops on which they relied from Jellalabad and Candahar, aggravated the dangers of their position at Cabul in a most material degree;[1]* for possibly, if they

[1] Macnaghten to M'Gregor, Nov. 14 and 17, 1841; Kaye, ii. 63, 73.

* "I have written to you daily, pointing out our precarious state, and urging you to return here, with Sale's brigade, with all possible expedition. General Elphinstone has done the same; and we now learn, to our utter dismay, that you have proceeded to Jellalabad. Our situation is a desperate one, if you do not immediately return to our relief; and I beg that you will do so without a moment's delay. We have been now besieged for fourteen days, and without your assistance are utterly unable to carry on any offensive operations. You can easily make Cabul in eight marches, and as the Ghilzyes are here, you would not have many enemies to contend with."—SIR W. MACNAGHTEN to CAPTAIN M'GREGOR, Cabul, 17th November 1841; KAYE, ii. 73.

CHAP. XL. 1841.

had come up, the blockade of the cantonments might have been raised, provisions obtained, as before the siege commenced, from the surrounding country, the enemy defeated in the field, and the whole disasters of the campaign avoided.

114. Destruction of the Ghoorka regiment in the Kohistan. Nov. 13.

While disaster was thus closing its iron net round the British forces in the capital, calamities of a still more serious kind had befallen the British forces in other quarters. On the 15th November, Major Pottinger and Lieutenant Haughton came in wounded from Charekar, and reported that the gallant Ghoorka regiment had been annihilated. This noble corps, second to none in the East in valour and fidelity, had been placed in some fortified barracks at Charekar, the defences of which were only in course of construction, when the insurrection broke out, and they were immediately surrounded by several thousand armed men, whose hostile intentions, notwithstanding loud professions of fidelity and friendship, were soon too apparent. With characteristic treachery, the chiefs invited Pottinger, the political agent, and Rattray, who commanded a party in the neighbourhood, to a conference, at which the latter was basely assassinated, and from which the former with difficulty escaped with his life. The Affghans now threw off the mask, and closely invested the fortified barracks. So numerous were the enemy's forces, that Havildar Mootre Ram, of the Ghoorka regiment, who escaped from the attack, said, "there were whole acres of gleaming swords moving towards us." Pottinger, throwing off, on the approach of danger, his political character, took charge, as at the siege of Herat, of the guns; and the Ghoorkas, supported by the fire of his artillery, made a heroic defence against repeated assaults by an enemy five times their number. Night found them still in possession of their position; but next day the garrison of a castle in the neighbourhood, which commanded the barracks, was betrayed into surrendering, and the balls from it

Nov. 3.

began to shower down on the position. Soon it was discovered that they had a worse enemy to contend with than even the matchlocks of the Affghans, for there was no water for the garrison. Every effort made to obtain a supply of this necessary element failed; and at length the sufferings of the men became so intolerable that they sallied out and found death from the Affghan marksmen, in the frantic desire to obtain a few drops of the precious fluid from a spring which gushed from a neighbouring rock. The lips of the men became swollen and bloody; their tongues clove to the roofs of their mouths. Seeing destruction inevitable if they remained where they were, and disdaining, even in such desperate circumstances, to surrender, Pottinger and Haughton resolved on a desperate attempt to cut their way through the enemy. They put themselves, accordingly, at the head of two hundred men, all who remained of the regiment, and by almost superhuman efforts succeeded in forcing their way through. But numbers fell in the desperate attempt; still more perished of thirst on the way, or sunk under the balls or knives of the Affghans who crowded round the retreating column. Pottinger and Haughton alone, with a single sepoy, half dead with wounds and fatigue, but unsubdued, reached the cantonments at Cabul to tell the dismal tale. The whole remainder of the regiment, after struggling to the last with devoted valour under its worthy leaders, Ensign Rose and Dr Grant, perished.[1]

CHAP. XL. 1841.

[1] Pottinger's Report, Nov. 17, 1841, MS.; Kaye, ii. 70-72; Thornton, vi. 268-270; Eyre's Journal, 148-152.

115. Arguments for a removal into the Bala-Hissar.

The only course which, amidst such accumulating difficulties, presented a chance even of escape to the British at Cabul, after it was ascertained that no reinforcements were to be looked for either from Jellalabad or Candahar, was to move the whole forces, and all the provisions that could be got together, at once into the Bala-Hissar, where they would, in the mean time, have been free from molestation, and they might have securely sallied out in large bodies, and obtained supplies from the adjoining country. Shah Soojah favoured this move-

CHAP. XL.

1841.

ment, and the engineers had earnestly counselled it from the very commencement of the insurrection. Shelton, however, opposed it in the most vehement manner, as dangerous, discreditable, and likely to be attended with a great loss. Elphinstone had scarcely any opinion on the subject; Macnaghten unfortunately yielded to Shelton's arguments, and the removal of the force to the Bala-Hissar was given up. Yet it presented a very fair, and the sole chance of escape from disaster; for what had rendered the sallies from the cantonments hitherto so unfortunate was, that they were of such extent that, from the number required for their defence, few only could be spared for external operations; whereas, as the troops would have been safe in the citadel, a much greater and more imposing force might have been spared for external foraging attacks. And if all the useless mouths had been removed from the Bala-Hissar, there were provisions in it enough to have served the whole fighting men in it and the cantonments till spring.[1]

[1] Sir W. Macnaghten to Elphinstone, Nov. 18, 1841; Kaye, ii. 75, 77, 83; Melville's Reports, ibid. 117.

116. Fruitless attempt at negotiation.

It being determined not to retire to the Bala-Hissar, nothing remained but to open negotiations for a capitulation with the enemy. The military authorities incessantly represented to the envoy "the distressed state of the troops and cattle from want of provisions, and the hopelessness of further resistance." These representations, coupled with the non-arrival of the expected reinforcements from Jellalabad and Candahar, and the addition of the Affghans under Akbar Khan, who had destroyed the Ghoorka regiment, to the besieging force, rendered it but too plain that this must be the ultimate issue of the struggle. Correspondence, accordingly, passed between the envoy and General Elphinstone on the subject; but before it could be brought to a point, an action, one of the most disastrous ever sustained by the British army, was fought. Notwithstanding the blockade, the commissaries, owing to the indefatigable activity of Captain Johnson, had hitherto daily drawn supplies of grain from the village of Beh-

Meru; and the enemy, seeing this, planted troops upon the adjacent hills to prevent its continuance. Upon this, Macnaghten urged an immediate attack, to dispossess them of this commanding position; and although Shelton strongly represented the hazard of such a step in the fatigued and disheartened state of the men, it was finally determined that it should take place. A feeble attempt to dislodge the enemy having failed on the 22d, preparations on a large scale were made for renewing the attack at daybreak on the following morning.[1]

[1] Shelton's Statement; Eyre's Journal, 142; Kaye, ii. 84, 85.

117. Action on the 23d.

The attack took place, accordingly, at the hour fixed on, and at first with unlooked-for success. The force consisted of seventeen companies, of whom five were Europeans of the 44th; three squadrons of native horse, a hundred sappers, *and one gun.* Why one only was taken when there were plenty in the cantonments, and an order of Lord Hastings forbade less than *two guns* ever to be taken out on any occasion, is one of the mysteries of that unhappy day which will probably never be cleared up. The single gun, however, did good service; sending a shower of grape at daylight into the village, it caused a panic among the enemy in it, which led the greater part of them to abandon it. Advantage, however, was not taken of the surprise to storm the village, part of which remained in the enemy's hands; and soon crowds of Affghans, on the alarm being spread, came pouring out of the city to give the Feringhees battle. Shelton, seeing his force, which did not exceed fourteen hundred men, greatly outnumbered, drew them up in two squares on the brow of the hill, with the gun in front and the cavalry in rear. The gun was splendidly worked, and for a time did terrible execution in the crowded masses of the Affghans; but from being so often fired, it became so heated in the vent that it could not at length be used. Nothing remained then but the muskets of the men to reply to the matchlocks of the Affghans; and it was soon found that they would not carry so far as the long guns of the enemy. Securely

CHAP. XL.

1841.

posted at a distance, where the infantry's balls could not reach them, the Affghans, second to none in the world as marksmen, sent in a destructive fire into our squares, on which, as on the Russian masses afterwards at Inkermann, every shot took effect. Their ammunition failed, and Shelton, whose courage never failed him in danger, in vain called on his men to use their bayonets. Not a musket was brought down to the charge, even in the English companies; and so completely were the troops depressed that when the Affghans, in bravado, planted a standard within thirty yards of the British ranks, not a man would advance to take it. In vain the officers nobly stood in front, and in default of ammunition hurled stones at the enemy; the sepoys would not move. Seeing their advantage, the Affghans made a sudden rush on the column, and surrounded the gun. The gunners fought with desperate resolution, and were cut down at their post. Lieutenant Laing fell dead as he was waving his sword over the gun; Captain M'Intosh shared the same fate. The gun was abandoned, and the infantry retired; but being rallied by Shelton, they charged with the bayonet, drove the enemy back in confusion, and retook it, and at the same time Abdoollah Khan, their leader, fell.[1]

[1] Eyre's Journal, 119, 122; Lady Sale's Journal; Thornton, vi. 270-274; Kaye, ii. 85-87.

118. Total defeat of the British.

The crisis of the day had now arrived, and if Elphinstone had sent a body of troops out of the cantonments to pursue the flying enemy, all might have been restored, and a glorious victory gained. The envoy warmly urged such a step upon General Elphinstone, but he said it was a wild scheme, and negatived the proposal. Fresh horses, however, and a new limber, were sent out for the gun, which was soon in full activity, and playing with great effect upon the enemy. But fresh multitudes issued from the city, and again it was found that the British musket was no match at a long range for the Affghan jezails. The troops fell fast under the deadly storm, and yet they were so demoralised that nothing could induce them to advance and close with the enemy. At this moment, when

the officers were nearly all killed or wounded, and Shelton had five balls in his clothes, a party of Affghans who had crawled up a gorge unseen started up and poured in a fire on the British flank. In an instant a panic seized the whole force; horse and foot rushed precipitately down the hill, closely followed by the Affghan cavalry, which thundered in close pursuit. The gunners alone nobly sustained the honour of the British name. Intent only on the preservation of their gun, they dashed down the hill into the midst of the enemy's cavalry, and had nearly got through; but they were all killed or wounded, and the gun fell a second time into the enemy's hands. All order was now lost: Europeans and Asiatics, infantry and cavalry, rushed in one confused mass into the cantonments; and it was only in consequence of the neglect of the Affghans, who retired, uttering shouts of triumph, into the city, to follow up this advantage, that the whole cantonments did not fall into their hands.[1]

[1] Eyre's Journal, 123, 130; Lady Sale's Journal, 131; Thornton, vi. 274-277; Kaye, ii. 87-91; Melville's Journal, MS.

119. Negotiations with the enemy. Nov. 24.

This disastrous defeat rendered it utterly hopeless to think of continuing the contest, and nothing remained but to arrange the best terms of capitulation that could be obtained. The sick and wounded in the cantonments amounted already to seven hundred; and such was the state of apathy and despair to which the troops were reduced, that all thought of external operations was of necessity abandoned. Removal to the Bala-Hissar, however practicable at an earlier period, was not deemed possible in the demoralised state of the army, though the King and Captain Conolly earnestly counselled it as the only means of safety even at the eleventh hour. The enemy had made pacific overtures, and Macnaghten, after obtaining from Elphinstone a written opinion that the position was no longer tenable, agreed to go into the proposal. The Affghans, however, insisted on a surrender at discretion. To this the envoy positively refused to submit. "We shall meet then," said Sultan Mahommed Khan, who commanded the Affghans, "on the field of

CHAP. XL.

1841.

battle." "At all events," replied Macnaghten, "we shall meet at the day of judgment." And so the conference broke off: but during its brief continuance amicable relations had already sprung up between the opposite parties. The Affghans, fully armed, came round the cantonments and gave vegetables to the soldiers of the 44th, who went out unarmed among them, and shook hands with those with whom they had so recently been engaged in mortal strife.[1]

[1] Elphinstone to Macnaghten, Nov. 24, 1841; Kaye, ii. 93-96; Thornton, vi. 283.

120. Arrival of Akbar Khan, and renewal of the negotiation.

The immediate resumption of hostilities however was prevented, and the negotiations prolonged, by the arrival next day in the Affghan camp of Akbar Khan, a son of Dost Mahommed, who was less inclined than Sultan Mahommed to push matters to extremities. His arrival as the representative of his father, the sovereign of their choice, was hailed with joy by the Affghan chiefs, and the British deemed his presence a guarantee for the granting of more favourable terms, as his father and brother were prisoners in the hands of the British. His conduct was from the first distinguished by prudence and sagacity. Wisely resolving not to endanger the military advantages already gained by pushing a desperate foe to extremities, he turned his whole attention to cutting off the supplies, and with such success that both the men and animals in the cantonments were reduced to the last extremities.* But meanwhile Abdoollah Khan and Meer-Mussidu, two of the chiefs most hostile to the British, died of their wounds, and the negotiation was resumed under such promising auspices that Macnaghten wrote that their prospects were brightening, "and if we had only provisions, which with due exertions ought to be obtained, we should be able *to defy the whole of Affghanistan for any period.*"

Nov. 29.

* "In the mean time our cattle have been starving for some time past, not a blade of grass, nor a particle of *bhoosah* nor grain procurable. The barley in store is served out as provisions to the camp-followers, who *get half a pound for their daily food.* Our cattle are subsisted on the twigs, branches, and bark of trees. Scarcely an animal fit to carry a load."—CAPTAIN JOHNSON'S *Journal* MS. Records, 1st December 1841. KAYE, ii. 101.

CHAP. XL. 1841.

On the other hand, General Elphinstone wrote to the envoy: "Retreat without terms is almost impossible; few would reach Jellalabad. The only alternative is to renew the negotiation. With provisions we might hold out, but without them I do not see what can be done, or how we are to avert starvation." It was soon evident that the General's opinion was, as matters now stood, the better founded. On the 5th December the Affghans burnt, Dec. 5. in open day, a bridge, the sole means of retreat, which General Elphinstone had thrown across the Cabul river; Mahommed Shereef's Fort, the scene of such alternate victory and defeat, was abandoned next day, the moment Dec. 6. the enemy showed themselves before it; and the day after, Dec. 7. the guard for the protection of the cantonment bazaar, which had hitherto been intrusted to the 44th regiment, was withdrawn from them, and given to a sepoy regiment. So demoralised had even the European soldiers become, from their long-continued sufferings, that Lieut. Sturt, on being asked if the retaking of the Shereef's Fort was practicable and tenable, replied, "Practicable if the men will fight; tenable if they don't run away!" On the 8th December, provisions, even on the most reduced scale, only remained for four days, and a capitulation had become a matter of absolute necessity.[1]

[1] Lady Sale's Journal, 141; Kaye, ii. 113-115; Macnaghten to Elphinstone, Nov. 29, and Dec. 6 and 8, 1841; Kaye, ii. 109, 119; Thornton, vi. 284.

121. Capitulation with the Affghans. Dec. 11.

Two days after, intelligence was received of the brilliant success of Sir R. Sale at Jellalabad, which will be noticed in a succeeding chapter, but General Elphinstone held out no hopes to the envoy that it made any alteration in the posture of their affairs. The negotiation, accordingly, was resumed, and after a great many changes, a capitulation was finally agreed to, to the very last degree dishonourable to the British arms. By it, it was agreed that the British were to evacuate Dec. 10. Affghanistan with all possible expedition, retiring by the way of Peshawur, and be treated with all honour, and receive every possible assistance in carriage and provisions on their march. On the troops reaching Peshawur,

CHAP. XL. 1841.

Dost Mahommed and his family were to be restored to Cabul, and Shah Soojah and his family return to India. The Affghans were to remain on terms of amity with the English, and contract no alliance with any foreign power without their consent. The troops at Ghuznee and Candahar were to retire by Cabul or the Bolan Pass, and be provided with carriages and provisions like those from Cabul. The necessity of concluding this convention was thus set forth by the envoy, in a report left unfinished at his death: "The whole country had risen in rebellion; our communications on all sides were cut off; almost every public officer, whether paid by ourselves or his majesty, had declared for the new governor; and by far the greater part even of his majesty's domestic servants had deserted him. We had been fighting forty days against very superior numbers, under most disadvantageous circumstances, with a deplorable loss of valuable lives; and in a day or two we must have perished from hunger, to say nothing of the advanced season of the year and the extreme cold, from the effects of which the native troops were suffering severely. I had been repeatedly apprised by the military authorities that nothing could be done with our troops, and I regret to add that desertions to the enemy were becoming of frequent occurrence among them." [1]

[1] Treaty, Dec. 10, 1841; Sir W. Macnaghten's Report, Dec. 11, 1841; Kaye, ii. 123-127.

122. Faithlessness of the Affghans, and increased misery of the troops. Dec. 13.

But however stern may have been the necessity under which this humiliating convention was concluded, and however favourable in appearance some of the terms agreed to, the British ere long received convincing proof that they would not be observed by the savage and treacherous enemy with whom they had to deal. On the 13th December, in pursuance of the treaty, the British troops, six hundred in number, evacuated the Bala-Hissar, leaving Shah Soojah and his native troops in it; and the moment they were out, the gates were closed, and the guns opened on the retiring columns without any distinction of friend or foe. The troops were obliged to halt on the ground before

they reached the cantonments, and pass the night on the snow during intense cold, without food, fire, or covering of any sort. They could do nothing but stand "or walk about, looking for the rising of the morning star." The Affghan chiefs, instead of serving the men with provisions and carriages, as stipulated in the treaty, refused to give them any until the forts still held were surrendered. This was conceded, and on the 16th the Affghans were in possession of all the British forts, and their colours waved on the ramparts. Still provisions came in very slowly, so that the men were literally "living from hand to mouth," and no carriages at all were sent. The very grain brought out by our own men from the Bala-Hissar, amounting to sixteen hundred maunds of wheat, was abandoned to a worthless rabble who pillaged and carried it off under the very eyes of our starving soldiers. Even after that, supplies were brought in very slowly and irregularly by the Affghans; and as carriages were wholly awanting, it was impossible to set out on the march.* On the 18th, snow began to fall in great quantities, and before evening was several inches deep; while the Affghans, growing hourly more insolent by the sight of our distresses, now rose in their demands, and insisted on the entire surrender of their arms and guns by the famishing and half-frozen multitude.[1]

Dec. 16.

Dec. 18.

[1] Kaye, ii. 137-141; Eyre, 148-151; Thornton, vi. 289-291.

123. Secret negotiation of Sir W. Macnaghten with Akbar Khan.

On the 19th, intelligence was received of the return of M'Laren's brigade to Candahar, which closed the door against all hope of succour from that quarter, to which the envoy had clung with desperate tenacity, and orders were sent to the generals in command in that station and at Jellalabad to evacuate them without delay, in terms of the convention. Driven by so many untoward circumstances, Macnaghten now turned a willing ear to certain proposals made to him by some chiefs of the rival factions, by which he hoped to sow dissension among them, and possibly enable him to shake himself loose of a treaty from which the Affghans had already openly receded. The proposal

CHAP. XL. 1841.

came from Akbar Khan, and was to the effect that Amen Oollah Khan, one of the most powerful of the hostile chiefs, should be seized and imprisoned, the Bala-Hissar and Mahommed Khan forts reoccupied by the British troops, who were to hold them some months longer, and then evacuate the country in a friendly manner; that Shah Soojah was to retain the sovereignty, but Akbar Khan to be declared his vizier, and receive a very large gratuity in money. It was added, that for a reasonable sum the head of the hostile chief should be sent to Shah Soojah. Macnaghten replied to the last proposal in terms worthy of a British diplomatist, "that it was neither his custom nor that of his country to give a price for blood;" but in the desperate condition of the British army, the previous ones appeared well worthy of consideration, and a meeting to discuss them more fully was arranged with Akbar Khan to take place on the following day.[1]

[1] Macnaghten to Mohun Lal, Dec. 21, 1841; Kaye, ii. 140-144; Thornton, vi. 290, 291.

124. His murder by Akbar Khan. Dec. 23.

Macnaghten was not ignorant of the danger of attending any conference with such faithless and treacherous parties as the Affghan chiefs; but circumstances were so desperate that he clung to any ray of hope, however feeble; and as he said himself, "death would be preferable to the life of anxiety he had been leading for six weeks past." He went, accordingly, to the place appointed, accompanied by Lawrence, Trevor, and Mackenzie, his confidential staff-officers; and although warned by the latter that it was a plot, he persevered with devoted courage, deeming it the only possible way of averting destruction from the army, dishonour from the country. He merely left orders with Elphinstone to have two regiments and two guns got ready as quickly as possible to secure Mahommed Khan's fort, and left the General with some expressions of impatience at the remonstrances made against his imprudence. So impressed was Elphinstone with the idea that he was rushing on his destruction, that he wrote him a letter after

he left him, entreating him to be cautious; but it never reached its destination. The parties met on a hillock near the banks of the river, about six hundred yards from the cantonments. The English officers and Affghan chiefs exchanged salutations, and Akbar Khan received with many thanks an Arab horse, which he had greatly coveted, and expressed his gratitude also for a pair of pistols he had been presented with on the preceding day. It was then proposed that the whole party should dismount, which was accordingly done. Akbar Khan asked Macnaghten if he was ready to carry out the proposals of the preceding evening? "Why not?" said the latter. The Affghans by this time were closing round the circle in great numbers, which Lawrence and Mackenzie observed, and requested they might be removed to a greater distance, as the conference was a secret one. The chiefs then lashed out with their whips at the closing circle, and at the same time Akbar said it was of no consequence, as they were all in the secret, at the same time saying aloud, "Seize! Seize!" Scarcely were the words uttered, when the envoy and whole party were violently seized from behind. The envoy was dragged along by Akbar himself; and as he struggled violently, the Affghan drew one of the pistols with which he had been presented on the preceding day, and shot him through the back. A crowd of Affghans rushed in and completed his destruction with their knives, by which he was literally cut to pieces. His mangled remains were carried to the great bazaar, where they were shown to admiring and applauding multitudes; and his right hand was cut off, and exhibited at a window. Trevor was massacred on the spot; Lawrence and Mackenzie almost by a miracle reached Mahommed Khan's fort prisoners, but alive.[1]

[1] Eyre's Journal, 163-174; Kaye, ii. 150-155; Thornton, vi. 292-294.

125. Reflections on this event.

In forming an opinion on this sad event, it is evident, in the first place, that Akbar Khan and the Affghan chiefs around him were guilty of the foulest and most abominable treachery in the murders which were com-

CHAP. XL.

1841.

mitted. The envoy was at a conference which they themselves had proposed, accompanied only by his staff officers: no hostility on his part was either designed or possible; the character of an ambassador is sacred by the laws of all nations, even the most barbarous. At first sight it seems that Macnaghten's conduct was also open to exception in point of morality as well as prudence, because he went to the conference in order to arrange a plan for the seizure of the forts ceded by the treaty, and some of the chiefs at that time in dubious and insincere alliance with the British. But in answer to this, it must be recollected that the envoy stood in a very different situation from what he would have done had he been dealing with European diplomatists, with whom performance of engagements may generally be relied on. The Affghan chiefs had violated the treaty in every particular; rigidly exacting the performance of their obligations by the British, they had scarcely performed one of the stipulations agreed to by themselves. Sir William Macnaghten's position was a desperate one; he hazarded all upon a single throw, but that throw offered, in circumstances otherwise hopeless, a fair chance of saving the army and the honour of the country. History cannot condemn him, if, dealing with an artful and treacherous enemy, with no other chance of escape for himself or his troops, he sought to circumvent him by his own method, and must applaud the magnanimity with which, even in the last extremity, he refused to stain his hands with blood, and freely offered his own life to a foe whose hostility he disdained to deprecate by the sacrifice of another.

126. Fresh treaty, which is opposed by Pottinger.

So completely were the energies of the once brave and powerful British army paralysed by the disasters they had undergone, and their want of confidence in the chiefs by whom they were led, that even this terrible disaster could not rouse them from the state of despair and apathy in which they were plunged. "The envoy," says Kaye, "had been killed in broad day, and upon the open plain,

but not a gun was fired from the ramparts of the cantonments, not a company of troops sallied out to rescue or revenge. The body of the British minister was left to be hacked to pieces, and his mangled remains were paraded in barbarous triumph about the streets and bazaars of the city." Eldred Pottinger, whose heroism had saved Herat, and who had become political agent on Macnaghten's death, in vain endeavoured to infuse into the other chiefs a portion of his own undaunted spirit. The day after the massacre the draft of a new treaty was sent in Dec. 24. to General Elphinstone, substantially the same as the former one, but with this difference, that it was now proposed that "the guns, except six ordnance stores, and muskets, in excess of these in use, shall be given up, and six hostages given for the safe return of Dost Mahommed and his family." Pottinger strenuously opposed these conditions, and said that now was the time to fling themselves into the Bala-Hissar, or fight their way down, sword in hand, to Jellalabad. Letters were at the same time received from Jellalabad and Candahar, announcing the reinforcements which were on their way from India, and urging Elphinstone to hold out.* But Shelton pronounced the occupation of the Bala-Hissar to be "impracticable;" and after making the most strenuous resistance, Pottinger was obliged to give in, and agree to the terms proposed.[1]

[1] Pottinger's Journal; Kaye, ii. 177-179; Thornton, vi. 297 299.

When the guns came to be given up, the agony of their

* "The General, from his illness, was incapable of making up his mind; and the constant assertion of the impossibility by his second in command, outweighed the entreaties of the envoy when alive, and of mine after; and a retreat on Jellalabad was the only thing they would hear of, notwithstanding that I pointed out the very doubtful character of any engagement we might make with the insurgents, the probability that they would not make it good, and begged that they would spare us the dishonour, and the Government the loss, which any negotiation must entail. In a council of war held at the General's house, Shelton, Anquestil, Chambers, Grant, and Bellew present, *every one voted to the contrary*—so, seeing I could do nothing, I consented. At the time we had but two courses open to us, which, in my opinion, promised a chance of saving our honour and part of the army: one was, to occupy the Bala-Hissar and hold it till spring—by this we should have had the best chance of success; the other was, to have abandoned our camp and baggage and encumbrances,

CHAP. XL.

1842.

127. Conclusion of the treaty. Jan. 1, 1842.

humiliation burst at once on the unhappy soldiers; and the murmur was loud in the camp, that any attempt, however desperate, should be risked, rather than submit to such an indignity. But the chief saw no alternative, and all that Pottinger could do was to procrastinate, and give up the Shah's cannon two at a time only to the enemy. At length, however, the guns, muskets, waggons, and ammunition, except the six cannons reserved, were all given up, and the hostages put into the enemy's hands. The Affghans were very anxious to get some of the ladies and married men into their possession; but this was positively refused, and not farther insisted on at that time. On the 29th December such of the sick and wounded as could not bear the journey down were sent into the city, and every preparation made for the march which circumstances would admit. But these circumstances were wretched in the extreme, and indicated too surely the fate which awaited the attempt. The Affghans, hovering round the walls, insulted the British at their very gates, interrupted the supplies obtained with such difficulty by the commissariat, and assaulted the drivers. Already it was evident that no reliance whatever could be placed on the promise to furnish provisions to the troops on the march, and that the army would set out into a snowy wilderness of mountains without either ammunition, food, tents, or carriage. When these acts of depredation were complained of to the chiefs, they coolly answered that they could not prevent them, and that the British should themselves fire on the wretches concerned; but this was deemed too hazardous, as tending directly to a renewal of hostilities.[1]

[1] Johnson's Journal, Jan. 1, 1842; Kaye, ii. 187, 188; Eyre's Journal, 199, 205; Thornton.

At length, on 6th January, the march commenced, under circumstances of depression unparalleled in the annals of mankind; for when the French set out from Moscow,

and forced our way down. This was perilous, but practicable. However, I could not persuade them to sacrifice baggage, and that was eventually one of the chief causes of our disasters."—MAJOR POTTINGER to CAPTAIN M'GREGOR; *MS. Records.* KAYE, ii. 179.

their army, 90,000 strong, and with all their guns and ammunition complete, was, comparatively speaking, in a prosperous condition. The situation of the troops is thus described in the eloquent words of an eyewitness: "At length the fatal morning dawned which was to witness the departure of the Cabul force from the cantonments in which it had sustained a two months' siege, to encounter the miseries of a winter march through a country of perhaps unparalled difficulty, where every mountain defile, if obstinately defended by a determined enemy, must inevitably prove the grave of hundreds. Dreary, indeed, was the scene over which, with drooping spirits and dismal forebodings, we had to bend our unwilling steps. Deep snow covered every inch of mountain and plain with one unspotted sheet of dazzling white; and so intensely bitter was the cold, as to penetrate and defy the defences of the warmest clothing. Sad and suffering issued from the British cantonments a confused mass of Europeans and Asiatics, a mingled crowd of combatants and non-combatants, of men of various climes and complexion and habits—part of them peculiarly unfitted to endure the hardships of a rigorous climate, and many of a sex and tender age which in general exempts them from such scenes of horror." The number of the crowd was large—4500 fighting men, of whom 700 were Europeans, with six guns and three mountain-train pieces, and upwards of 12,000 camp-followers. The advance began to issue from the cantonments at nine in the morning, and from that time till dark the huge and motley crowd continued to pour out of the gates, which were immediately occupied by a crowd of fanatical Affghans, who rent the air with their exulting cries, and fired without scruple on the retiring troops, by which fifty men were killed. When the cantonments were cleared, all order was lost, and troops, and camp-followers, and horses, and foot-soldiers, baggage, public and private, became involved in one inextricable confusion. The shadows of night overtook the huge multitude while still pushing their

128. Commencement of the march. Jan. 6, 1842.

CHAP. XL.

1842.

weary course; but the cold surface of the snow reflected the glow of light from the flames of the British residency, and other buildings, to which the Affghans had applied the torch the moment they were evacuated by our troops. Weary and desperate, the men lay down on the snow without either food, fire, or covering; and great numbers were frozen to death before the first rays of the sun gilded the summits of the mountains."[1]

[1] Eyre's Journal, 214, 220; Kaye, ii. 217, 223.

129. Increasing horrors of the march. Jan. 7.

Disastrous as were the circumstances under which this terrible march commenced, they were much aggravated on the succeeding day. All order was lost—not a semblance even of military array was kept up save with the rearguard; while numbers of Affghans, evidently moving parallel to the retreating multitude, showed themselves on the heights above, and, in open defiance of the capitulation, commenced a fire upon them. They even attacked the rear-guard, and after a violent struggle took the mountain-guns, which, though immediately retaken by Lieutenant White, could not be brought away, and were spiked amidst the gleaming sabres of the enemy. "Two other guns were soon after abandoned, as the horses were unable to drag them through the snow. Although at nightfall they had only accomplished six miles of their wearisome journey, the road was covered with dying wretches perishing under the intolerable cold. The sepoys, patient and resigned, sunk on the line of march, awaiting death. Horses, ponies, baggage-waggons, camp-followers, and soldiers were confusedly huddled, while over the dense mass the jezails of the Affghans, posted on the rocks and heights above, sent a storm of balls, every one of which took effect among the multitude. The enemy severely pressed on our rear the four remaining guns, which fell into their hands. The soldiers, weary, starving, and frost-bitten, could no longer make any resistance.[2] There was no hope but in the fidelity of Zemaun Khan, who had always been true to us, and had now arrived on the spot; but although he had exerted himself to

[2] Eyre, 226, 227; Kaye, ii. 224-226; Thornton, vi. 305, 306.

procure supplies, scarcely any were got. Meanwhile the attacks of the Affghans continued without intermission."

The army was in this dreadful state when it arrived at the entrance of the Coord Cabul defile. It is five miles in length, and bounded on either side with steep overhanging mountains. It is so narrow, the sun never penetrates its gloomy jaws; there is barely room for a rugged road or horse-track between the torrent and the precipices. The stream dashes down the whole way with inconceivable impetuosity, and requires to be crossed eight-and-twenty times in the course of the descent. To add to the horrors of this defile, the frost had covered the road and edges of the torrent with a coating of ice, on which the beasts of burden could find no secure footing, and in attempting to pass which great numbers slipped, fell into the water, and were swept down by its resistless rush. The heights above were crowded with Affghans, who, securely posted on the summits of precipices inaccessible from the bottom of the ravine, kept up an incessant fire on the confused and trembling multitude which was struggling through the defile beneath. All order was soon lost, if any still remained. Baggage, ammunition, property, public and private, were abandoned at every step, and so complete was the paralysis, that the sepoys allowed their muskets to be taken out of their hands without attempting any resistance. The massacre was terrible in this frightful defile. Three thousand perished under the balls or knives of the Affghans; and in the midst of the confusion of this scene of carnage, the English ladies, who accompanied the columns on horseback, often strained their eyes in vain to descry their children, lost in the horrors in which they were enveloped.[1]

130. Passage of the Coord Cabul defile.

[1] Lady Sale's Journal; Eyre, 226, 227; Kaye, ii. 228, 231.

Such of the troops as contrived to get through this dreadful defile had fresh difficulties of a different kind to contend with. The road now ascended the high tableland of Coord Cabul, and the snow fell in great quantities, rendering it in many places impassable for ani-

CHAP. XL.

1842.

131. Ascent of the Coord Cabul plateau, and surrender of the ladies. Jan. 8.

mals or carriages. A cold biting wind from the north-east swept over the lofty bare surface, rendering it almost certain death to sit down, however wearied the wretches might be. Here, however, the whole army were obliged to bivouac, without tents, fire, or shelter of any kind. There were only four tents left; one was given to the General, two to the ladies, and one to the sick. In compliance with a recommendation from Akbar Khan, the army halted for a day; but the inexpedience of this delay was so evident that a great part of the native troops and camp-followers moved on without any order, and the sepoys began to desert in great numbers. Akbar Khan, seeing the troops reduced to this woeful plight, now renewed his demand for the giving up of the married officers *and their wives*, he promising to keep them a day's march in the rear of the army, and in perfect safety. Heart-rending as this proposal was to honourable and gallant men, no resistance was made to it—so evident to all was the necessity of the case, and so certain the destruction which awaited them if they remained with the remnant of the troops; and soon after the whole ladies, with their husbands, escorted by a troop of Affghan horse, set out for the rear of the army, and were placed in the power of the treacherous barbarian who had so recently imbrued his hands in the blood of the confiding and honourable British envoy.[1]

[1] Eyre, 228, 236; Kaye, ii. 229-231; Thornton, vi. 311-313.

132. Almost entire destruction of the column.

The European soldiers were now almost the only efficient troops left. The sepoys, unaccustomed to a rigorous climate, had almost all sunk, or been slain by the Affghans. Nearly all of them were frost-bitten in the hands, face, or feet; few were able to hold a musket, much less draw a trigger; the prolonged march in the snow had paralysed the mental and physical powers even of the strongest men. "Hope," says Eyre, "seemed to have died in every breast; the wildness of terror was exhibited in every countenance." The end was now approaching. At the entrance of a narrow gorge, where

the road passed between two hills, a strong body of Affghan marksmen appeared, who barred all farther passage, and kept up so heavy a fire on the column as it approached, that the whole sepoys broke and fled. Seeing this, the Affghans rushed down, sword in hand, captured the public treasure, and all of the baggage which hitherto had been preserved. A hundred and fifty cavalry troopers, fifty horse-artillerymen, seventy of the 44th, and one gun, alone forced their way through, and formed now the sole remaining fighting men of the army. Akbar proposed a surrender to this little body; but they indignantly rejected the proposal, and pushed on, sword in hand, through the crowds of camp-followers, bands of Affghans, and the snowy wilderness.[1]

[1] Eyre, 236-238; Kaye, ii. 231-233; Thornton, vi. 314.

133. Continuance of the retreat to Jugdulluck.

Still hovering round the rearguard, the Affghan horsemen continued the pursuit of the miserable but undaunted band of men who, in defiance of all obstacles, continued their course. Oppressed by a crowd of camp-followers, and almost as much impeded by them as by their enemies, the wreck of the British force made its desperate way down the steep deserts of the Haft-Kotul, strewn with the melancholy remains of camp-followers, and soldiers who had formed the advance of the column. As they passed down, a heavy fire was opened on the flanks of the column; but the rearguard, led by Shelton, with invincible firmness repelled the assault, and for a time preserved the remnant of the force from destruction. Seeing ruin inevitable if a start was not gained upon the enemy, Shelton proposed a night-march, in the hope of shaking off the crowd of camp-followers which, from the very beginning, had clung to them, and proved as injurious as the jezails of the enemy. Having spiked their last gun, they set off at ten at night; but the alarm had spread to the camp-followers, and they clustered round them as ruinously as before. It was a clear frosty night, and for some hours the march was unmolested; but before morning the enemy overtook the rear, and opened a fire on the dark

CHAP. XL. 1842.

moving mass, which impelled the terrified crowd of camp-followers upon the few soldiers in front, and, blocking up the road, rendered it necessary for the rearguard to force a passage through at the bayonet's point. When the way was at length cleared, a dense mass of Affghans was found barring any farther progress; but the little band of European heroes, led by Shelton, kept the enemy in the rear in check, and gallantly forced their way through to Jugdulluck. Here the men lay down in the snow to gain a few hours' rest, after thirty hours' incessant marching and waking; but hardly had they done so when a fire was opened upon them by the Affghans, and they were compelled once more to fight. The enemy, however, deterred by their resolution, fled on their approach; and the wearied column returned to Jugdulluck, where they remained, under the shelter of a ruined wall, but still exposed to the fire of the Affghans, all the succeeding day.[1]

[1] Eyre, 239. 246; Kaye, ii. 240, 241; Thornton, vi. 316-318.

134. Termination of the retreat, and arrival of one survivor at Jellalabad.

Here the conferences were resumed, and Akbar Khan insisted upon General Elphinstone, Brigadier Shelton, and Captain Johnson, remaining hostages in his hands for the evacuation of Jellalabad. This was not at first agreed to, and these officers repaired to the Affghan chief's headquarters to arrange the terms, where they were detained by force, in defiance of their sacred character as pacific negotiators. Alarmed at the non-return of their leaders, Major Thain and Captain Skinner rode out in the direction they had gone, in quest of tidings; they were met by a body of Affghans, who fired a volley, by which the former was mortally wounded. Meanwhile Elphinstone and Shelton remained in Akbar Khan's hands; and Johnson, who understood Persian, overheard the party who surrounded them conversing in that language on the pleasure they would have in cutting the Feringhees' throats. The remaining body of the British, now reduced to twenty fighting men, resumed their march at nightfall, in the hopes of straggling on

ahead of their pursuers, to Jellalabad. As day dawned they approached Gundamuck; but there their numerical weakness became visible, and they were again surrounded by a body of the enemy. Captain Souter tied the colours of his regiment round his waist, by which they were preserved, and the unconquerable band of heroes pursued their way on, though sorely weakened at every step. In a desperate struggle, on leaving Gundamuck, nearly every man in the British party was wounded. Twelve officers and a few cavalry, all bleeding, rode ahead of the troop, and six of them dropped down from their horses before reaching Futterabad. The remainder were treacherously assailed there, when taking food, by the natives, who had professed sympathy, and began by showing kindness; two were slain, the others reached their horses and escaped. All perished, however, EXCEPTING ONE MAN, Dr Brydon, before reaching Jellalabad. Worn out and wounded, he had struggled on, borne by a jaded pony, till the walls of the fortress appeared in sight. He was descried from the ramparts, and brought in by a party sent to succour him, being the SOLE SURVIVOR, not a captive, of the Affghanistan expedition.[1]

[1] Eyre, 246-248; Johnson's Journal; Kaye, ii. 240, 249; Thornton, vi. 310-319.

135. Conduct of Sale and Nott.

While, however, the honour of the British name was thus tarnished at Cabul, Sir Robert Sale at Jellalabad, and General Nott at Candahar, nobly vindicated it, and gave a proof of what might have been done, with the much larger force than they had at their disposal, if similar capacity and resolution had been displayed at Cabul. Sale had been required, under the conditions of the treaty concluded by Macnaghten, to evacuate Jellalabad; but when summoned by Akbar Khan and the envoy to fulfil that stipulation, he answered, well knowing the treachery of the chiefs with whom he had to deal, that as he knew the chiefs in the neighbourhood were inciting their followers to destroy the garrison of Jellalabad, he deemed it proper to await further orders before obeying the summons; and requested to know, before leaving the fortress, what secu-

CHAP. XL. 1842.

rity would be given for the safe conduct of the troops to Peshawur. A similar answer was returned by Nott from Candahar, and when intelligence arrived of the massacre of the Cabul army in defiance of the convention, both these gallant officers held out and preserved these important fortresses for the British forces. In them, under the gallant lead of Pollock, Monteith Douglas, Sale, and Nott, began the glorious operations which redeemed the honour of the British name, and led to triumphs so transcendant as to throw all the previous disasters into the shade.[1]

[1] Thornton, vi. 319-321; Kaye, ii. 25; Nott, i. 450.

136. Termination of Lord Auckland's administration, and Lord Ellenborough's appointment.

But the return of prosperous days, however glorious to the nation, came too late to redeem the character or lighten the load of anxiety which oppressed the Government. The mournful intelligence from Cabul reached Lord Auckland in the end of January. The previous month had been one of intense anxiety, relieved only at distant intervals by gleams of hope arising from the heroic conduct of the garrison of Jellalabad, to be recounted in a future chapter; but no apprehensions could equal the terrible reality, when the dismal intelligence arrived that only one man had survived out of seventeen thousand souls who had set out on their homeward journey from Cabul. The blow was stunning to the Governor-general, and the more so that the termination of his government was drawing near, and he had no time to repair the errors of his administration. Such was the consternation which prevailed, that little or nothing except ordering up a few regiments to Peshawur was done to arrest the calamity. Lord Auckland now saw clearly the disastrous consequences of the policy which he had been persuaded to adopt in regard to Affghanistan; and he returned home, sad and dispirited, in the spring of 1842. He was succeeded by Lord Ellenborough, who had been selected as Governor-general by Sir Robert Peel on his accession to office in October 1841, and arrived in Calcutta on 28th February.[2]

[2] Kaye, ii. 255, 287; Thornton, vi. 317, 325.

CHAP. XL.

1842. 137. Reflections on the injustice of the Affghanistan expedition.

Overwhelming from its magnitude, heart-rending from its suffering, awful from its completeness, the Affghanistan disaster is one of the most memorable events of modern times. Rivalling the first Crusade in the entire destruction with which it was attended, the Moscow campaign in the terrible features by which it was distinguished, it will long rivet the attention of man. Without doubt, it must be regarded, by those who contemplate national events as regulated by an overruling Providence, as a signal example of retributive justice—as the punishment of a nation for the glaring and unpardonable crimes of its rulers. The danger against which the expedition beyond the Indus was intended to guard, was neither remote nor imaginary; on the contrary, it was both real and pressing. Nothing could be more just or necessary than to take steps against the peril which the Russian subjugation of Persia, the attack on Herat, and the intrigues at Cabul, so clearly revealed. Policy, not less than the primary duty of self-defence, required that the British interest in Affghanistan should be strengthened, and a barrier opposed in its defiles against the oft-repeated northern invasion. But the British Government had no right, in the prosecution of this object, to overturn the reigning power in an independent kingdom—to force a hated dynasty on a reluctant people. The object might have been accomplished without the violation of any right, at scarcely any expense, and without the incurring of any risk. Dost Mahommed, the ruler of the nation's choice, was not only willing, but anxious, to enter into the British alliance, and for a comparatively trifling sum shut the gates of India for ever against the Muscovite battalions. When, therefore, instead of closing with his proposals, we resolved to dethrone him, and to force a hated king again upon the nation, in order that he might be a mere puppet in our hands, we committed as great a mistake in policy as a crime in morality.

But although every serious observer must discern in the

CHAP. XL.

1842.

138. Errors in the conception of the expedition.

fate of this memorable expedition an instance of the manner in which signal national crimes even in this world work out their own punishment, yet, humanly speaking, it is not difficult to discern the causes to which it was immediately owing. Conceived in injustice, it was cradled in error, and executed by incapacity. In the original plan of the campaign every military principle was violated; in carrying it out, every rule of military experience was disregarded. Throwing an expedition forward a thousand miles from its base of operations, through a desert, mountainous, and difficult country, inhabited by fierce and barbarous tribes, the Indian government repeated the error which had proved fatal to Napoleon in the Moscow campaign; but it did not, like him, seek to repair the mistake by moving up strong bodies of men to keep up the communications with the rear. The force with which the expedition was undertaken—under ten thousand fighting men, including only four European regiments—was altogether inadequate to both conquering the country, and keeping up the communications. Fifty thousand men, including ten thousand Europeans, would not have been too many for such an undertaking; and there never was a third of that number at the disposal of the commanders in Affghanistan.

139. Disproportion of the force to the object in view, and its effects.

This deficiency of force, and its disproportion to the object in view, was the result mainly of the great and ruinous pacific reductions which had taken place during the years of political hallucination which followed the passing of the Reform Bill in England. True, the military forces were rapidly increased as the necessities of the campaign unfolded themselves, and before they were closed the forces were again restored to their old level, of whom above 40,000 were Europeans; but that only changed the quarter in which danger was to be apprehended—it did not remove it. The new recruits were very different from the old soldiers; and the infusion of a large body of these young and inexperienced men

into the regiments, by the augmentation of the number of companies in each, weakened in a most serious degree the efficiency and steadiness of the whole. It was repeatedly observed during the Affghanistan campaign, that the troops, both native and European, failed at the decisive moment; and people asked, Are those the soldiers of Clive and Lake, of Wellington and Abercromby? In truth, they were not the soldiers of these men, though they wore the same dress, and bore the same arms. You cannot make a civilian a soldier in a few months, by merely putting arms into his hands and a uniform on his back. Years of military life, and acting together in circumstances of difficulty and danger, are indispensable to form that coolness in peril, and that thorough confidence between officers and men, which form the strength of real soldiers. The idea that you may without risk disband a veteran force on the return of peace, because you can raise a new one in a few months when war again breaks out, is one of the most fallacious that can possibly be entertained, and to which the disasters which have uniformly befallen the British nation, in the first years of every new war for a century and a half, are mainly to be ascribed.

140. Injudicious conferring of civil offices on military officers.

Connected with this source of weakness and danger is another, which is peculiar to the Indian army, and that is the great number of officers who, during peace, were withdrawn from their regiments, and intrusted with diplomatic duties as political agents. Economy, and a desire to run two services into one, was the mainspring of this system, and it is hard to say whether it proved most injurious to the civil or military service. To the former it brought an undue confidence in military knowledge, and induced a jealousy between the two services, by leading the young military political agent to assume the direction of the military movements, which he was often neither entitled nor qualified to do. To the latter it brought, without the abandonment of the mili-

CHAP. XL. 1842.

tary life, an entire ignorance of its details, and incapacity for its duties. The young political agent, accustomed to command, and to act as a sort of viceroy over some protected potentate, suddenly found himself, when hostilities broke out, recalled to his regiment, and immediately intrusted with the discharge of arduous and important military duties. He was then surrounded by soldiers to whom he was unknown, as much as they were to him. The first forenoon of real service in the field or in the trenches often revealed to the men under his command the incapacity of their new officer to direct them; and after that had been discovered, how was it possible that mutual confidence could be re-established, or either the officers lead or the men follow, in moments of difficulty or danger, as they ought? To this cause much of the errors in judgment, evinced in separate command by the officers, and of the timidity shown by the men in following their always gallant lead, is to be ascribed. The economists say that such a union of the two services is indispensable, in order to keep down the otherwise insupportable expenses with which the administration of affairs in India is attended; and possibly it is so. But that only shows that a system of government by one country at the distance of eight thousand miles from another is exposed to difficulty, and involves in itself the seeds of its own ruin, not that the system itself is not dangerous and big with future disaster.

141. Extreme error in the military arrangements at last.

Even with all these disadvantageous circumstances, although ultimate and entire success was hopeless, yet the extreme disaster which was sustained might have been avoided, had it not been for the obvious and almost inexplicable errors committed in the military arrangements when the final catastrophe approached. The neglect to occupy and strengthen the Bala-Hissar as the centre of our military operations; the mistake in placing the troops in exposed and extensive cantonments ill-fortified; and, above all, the extraordinary fault of putting

the whole magazines and commissariat stores in an undefended position, and in a manner at the mercy of the enemy, brought us into peril; and they are mainly to be ascribed to Sir W. Macnaghten, who did much to redeem these fatal errors by the courage he evinced when the danger came on, and the intrepid counsels which he in a manner forced upon the old and infirm commander-in-chief. With these immense mistakes General Elphinstone has no concern, for they were all committed, or in course of execution, when he assumed the command. But he is responsible for the want of decision and vigour evinced when the crisis arrived, and it had become evident that nothing but the utmost rapidity and resolution could avert the most terrible disasters. Had two thousand men and eight or ten guns been sent from the cantonments into the rebellious city when the insurrection first broke out, it would have been at once suppressed; had the troops and stores been at once moved into the Bala-Hissar when it was evident it had become serious, the army would have been in safety all winter, and might have calmly awaited its liberation by the arms of Pollock and Nott in the ensuing spring: whereas, by temporising, and adopting no decided line, the only means of salvation yet remaining were thrown away, and disasters unheard of were induced.

142. Causes of this.

Instead, however, of joining in the general chorus of abuse which has been levelled at the heads of the brave but ill-fated and unhappy men, who have now expiated with their lives any errors they may have committed, it is more material, as well as just, to endeavour to trace out the faulty national dispositions which have led *to such men being intrusted* with the administration of affairs so momentous, that it may be said the Indian empire hung upon their decisions. Macnaghten induced the danger by being over-sanguine, and shutting his eyes to its approach when every one else saw it was coming on. Elphinstone precipitated the catastrophe by

CHAP. XL. 1842.

want of decision and vigour when it arrived. This is now sufficiently evident; but the material point is, how did it happen that men who proved themselves so unfit for these momentous duties were intrusted with their discharge, when so many others perfectly qualified to have discharged them were passed over? That is the really important question; for unless this cause is discovered and removed, the nation may with certainty look for a repetition of similar disasters upon every fresh breaking-out of hostilities.

143. Causes to which the disaster was owing.

The popular party will exclaim that it is all to be ascribed to the aristocratic direction of military affairs in this country; that General Elphinstone was an old and infirm man, incapable of discharging the duties with which he was intrusted, and that that was the sole cause of the disaster. To this it seems sufficient to observe, that the misfortunes occurred when the popular regime was fully established in every department of the State; that Elphinstone was appointed by a Whig Governor-general, with the concurrence of a Whig cabinet, and that the army he commanded had been formed and moulded for ten years previously on popular principles, and by popularly-appointed Governor-generals and agents: It is in vain to ascribe, therefore, to aristocratic influence at the head of affairs a disaster which occurred when that influence was more in abeyance than it had ever been in English history, and when the popular influences from which so much was expected had been for many years in full and unrestricted activity.

144. Real causes of the disasters in a military point of view.

The truth is, the disasters in Affghanistan, so far as the military conduct of affairs is concerned, were owing to a cause unhappily of more general efficacy, and therefore more to be feared than the delinquencies of any party, either aristocratic, monarchical, or democratic. This is the tendency during peace of influential imbecility to acquire the direction of military affairs. In

war this is in a great measure prevented by the immediate and obvious peril with which the faulty direction of armies is then attended, and the rapidity with which the penalty of the appointment of incompetent officers is followed to the peccant Government. But during peace it is possible to make the most unsuitable appointments without their consequences being immediately felt: many a general can make a tolerable figure at reviews, or in conducting the civil affairs of an army, who breaks down at once in presence of an enemy, or under the pressure of real danger. If a peace is very long, this peril is greatly increased, because in addition to the ordinary danger of improper pacific appointments, there is the risk of *aged* incompetence being thrust upon the public service. As this danger arises from the principles of human nature, it remains the same in whatever political party the government of the State is vested. By popularising institutions, the danger, instead of being diminished, is materially increased. There are, in proportion to their numbers, as many imbeciles in the middle or lower ranks as in the higher, and therefore the only effect of augmenting the number of persons who are politically invested with the power of influencing Government, is to augment the number of incompetent persons who are forced by them to the head of affairs. There never was a country so ridden by incompetent generals as France was, from this cause, under the popular sway of the Directory, which caused it to lose the whole conquests of the Revolution, and the evil was never abated till the lead fell into the iron grasp of Napoleon.

14°. True way of combating the evil.

The only way to obviate this most serious evil, which continually, on the termination of a long peace, threatens the very existence of the State, is to turn the stream of influential fools in another direction, and make it *for their own interest* to permit that direction to be followed. This is to be done, and can only be secured, by the

CHAP. XL. 1042.

method which experience has suggested as alone effectual in public companies or offices—viz. by allotting adequate *retired allowances* to induce men incapacitated by age or infirmity to withdraw from their public functions. Necessity has long ago established this in the case of judges and all important civil functionaries; and a sense of its expedience has caused the same system to be adopted very generally in banks, railway and insurance companies, and other establishments where particular officers are intrusted with important duties. Unfortunately, however, the general jealousy of the army, and of the aristocratic influence which is supposed to regulate its appointments, has not only prevented any similar system being established in the higher grades of that service, but has cut away the few which in former times in some degree supplied its place. Nearly all military sinecures or retired allowances and appointments have been cut off during the quarter of a century of popular government which has elapsed since the Peace. The half-pay of a general—seldom more than two per cent on what he has paid for his commission—cannot be regarded as any adequate allowance for an officer who has held, perhaps, a governorship worth £3000 or £4000 a-year. Thus the superior officers, both of the army and navy, are compelled to *cling to active employment* as the only means of averting poverty and insignificance, and to bring into play the whole influence they can command to prevent their being deprived of it. This is the real cause of the number of influential but incapable men who, on the breaking out of a war after a long peace, are generally found to be at the head of affairs both in the army and navy.

Two dangers, of different kinds, but each most formidable in its way, thus beset every constitutional monarchy on the occurrence of war after a long peace. Democratic economy starves down the establishment,

Two dangers, and their remedy.

both by land and sea, to the very lowest point, and cuts off the whole sinecures or offices which might serve as retreats to influential imbecility, while aristocratic cupidity or parliamentary influence fastens with resistless grasp on the active employments, and forces numbers of old men, gallant and respectable, but past the possibility of useful service, upon the Government. The Affghanistan expedition afforded one memorable example of this, the Crimean will ere long afford a second. General Elphinstone was a gallant Waterloo veteran of high connection and most pleasing manners. Ensconced in a quiet governorship of £1500 a-year, he would have passed the close of his life in peaceful respectability, beloved by all who approached him. Placed at the head of the army in Affghanistan *because he was highly supported, and there was nowhere else to put him*, he lost an army, and all but lost an empire. Of all the sums expended by a nation, there is none so well bestowed as that which provides an easy and secure retreat for such men in the public service as are too influential to be overlooked, and yet too weakly by nature, or far advanced in years, to be able to discharge its duties with advantage. An hundred thousand a-year would be well bestowed in providing these harbours of refuge for powerfully supported incapacity. Of all the economies forced upon a popular government by the public voice, there is none so loudly applauded at the moment, and none so ruinous in the end, as that which cuts off all honourable and respectable retreats for veterans who have spent the best part of their lives in the service of their country, or younger men who are not equal to its duties. Such men will always be found in the public service; no initial examination or popularising of institutions can keep them out. On the contrary, they only add to their number, because they induce a greater number to clamour for admission, and bring more nume-

CHAP. XL. 1842.

rous interests to support their claims. It is in vain to think of closing the door against them; some ruling power in the State—aristocratic, democratic, or monarchical—will always get them in. The only wisdom is to establish institutions which shall facilitate their timely retreat.

END OF VOL. VI.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.

00029820

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 27 February, 2016